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THE KING AND HIS LADY-LOVE

LADY SUFFOLK
AND HER CIRCLE :: BY
:: :: LEWIS MELVILLE :: ::

With coloured frontispiece and sixteen other illustrations

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TO MY OLDEST FRIEND
EDWARD EDMONDS

PREFACE

THE earliest account of Henrietta Hobart, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, is to be found in the "Reminiscences" written in 1788 by Horace Walpole for the entertainment of Mary and Agnes Berry, his "twin-wives," and first printed ten years later by the elder sister in her edition of her friend's collected works. In the same year was published the "Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole," by Archdeacon Coxe, who therein corroborated many of Horace Walpole's statements concerning Lady Suffolk, and gave further information, particularly concerning the relations between that lady and Swift, Gay, Chesterfield and Bathurst. Lady Suffolk bequeathed her papers to her nephew, John, second Earl of Buckinghamshire; and after his death in 1793 they passed into the possession of his daughter, Emily Anne, who in the following year married the Hon. Robert Stewart, afterwards second Marquis of Londonderry, better known as Viscount Castlereagh. Lady Londonderry entrusted the papers to John Wilson Croker, who in 1824 published a selection of the correspondence under the title of "Letters to and from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, and her second husband, the Hon. George Berkeley, from 1712 to 1767." The two volumes, which were issued anonymously, met with a kindly greeting from Sir Walter Scott in the *Edinburgh Review* (March, 1824), who found the letters "interesting and curious," and expressed keen appreciation of the Introduction and Notes. They were greeted with a flood of vitriolic abuse by a writer in the *Quarterly Review* (January, 1824), who declared that "not above a dozen letters are in any way worthy of publication," and pronounced the Notes as "uniformly pert in their style, and generally inaccurate in their facts"—which last statement is fully justified. As Croker contravened many statements made by Horace Walpole and Coxe, as Scott joined issue with

him on at least one vital point, and as Croker, when editing Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" more than a score of years later, withdrew some of his earlier comments, it will be seen that it behoves Lady Suffolk's biographer to tread warily.

In the present work there are printed for the first time nearly forty letters of very considerable interest. They include Lady Suffolk's complaints to her royal lover, George II., concerning his treatment of her, and her demands to be informed what was the offence of which she had been so guilty that had resulted in his utter neglect of her. There is also a long series of communications which passed between Lady Suffolk and her husband, which is invaluable for the light it throws upon their relations from the marriage in 1706 to the legal separation two-and-twenty years later.

The letters which have been preserved are, with the exception of a few written in later life, of purely social interest. Indeed, so devoid are they of reference to politics or politicians as such, that it is almost certain that Lady Suffolk, who was at Court for twenty years in constant attendance upon a royal lady greatly interested in affairs, must have destroyed a great part of her correspondence. To this assumption support is afforded by the fact that Lord Buckinghamshire in her last years plies her from St. Petersburg with numerous questions about home politics and describes those of the Court to which he was accredited—a course he would scarcely have pursued had he not been aware of her interest in such matters.

The social interest, however, is abundant, and from the letters Lady Suffolk wrote and received the Court of George II., both as Prince of Wales and as King, can be reconstructed. Not to know Lady Suffolk, first at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge, then at St. James's and Hampton Court, and finally at Savile Row and Marble Hill, was to argue oneself unknown to polite circles; and, therefore, in the correspondence all the notabilities of the day make their bow. Three Prime Ministers wrote to her, Pelham, Grenville, and Pitt. Lord Peterborough, who was really old enough to know better, made "gallant" love to her. Pope and Arbuthnot were devoted to her; as were Lord Bathurst and Lord Chesterfield; while Gay and Swift sought her influence with the King. Among her intimates were Lord Bolingbroke and his second wife, Lord

Lansdowne, William Pulteney, and, presently, Horace Walpole and Lord Mansfield; and she was on the best of terms with Prior's "Kitty" and Lady Betty Germaine, and with the bevy of beautiful Maids of Honour, which included the charming "Molly" Lepell, the delightful Mary Bellenden, the vivacious "Peggy" Bradshaw, and the hoydenish Sophie Howe.

Lady Suffolk is mentioned by nearly all of her contemporaries, and references to her and her circle will be found in innumerable books, though the only sketch of her, and that but a few pages, will be found in Jesse's "Court of England." Her name appears frequently in the works, correspondence, and memoirs of Swift, Pope, Gay, Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, Hanbury Williams, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, Charlotte Lady Sundon, John Lord Hervey, Mary Lady Cowper, etc., etc.; in Russell's biography of Lord Peterborough; in Cobbett's "Memorials of Twickenham," Crisp's "Richmond," Law's "Hampton Court," and Walford's "Greater London." For the years she was at Hanover, Vehse's "Geschichte der deutschen Hof," Malortie's "Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes," and "Briefe des Herzog Ernst August zu Braunschweig-Lüneburg," should be consulted.

I am indebted for assistance during the composition of this work to the Hon. Vicary Gibbs, Mr. Harold Cox, the Rev. Henry W. Clark, D.D., and the Rev. H. P. Prosser, Vicar of Twickenham. The Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office has kindly permitted me to insert in these pages extracts from the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

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Lewis Melville.

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LADY SUFFOLK AND HER CIRCLE

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY LIFE OF HENRIETTA HOBART, AFTERWARDS THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

1688–1713

Henrietta Hobart—Her ancestry—Thomas Hobart—Sir James Hobart—Sir Henry Hobart, first baronet, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas—Sir Henry Hobart, fourth baronet—He marries Elizabeth Maynard—Their children—Henrietta—John, afterwards first Earl of Buckinghamshire—The date of Henrietta's birth unknown—Her marriage with the Hon. Henry Howard, afterwards ninth Earl of Suffolk—The character of Howard as drawn by Hervey and Chesterfield—Their poverty—The birth of their son—They go to Hanover—The Electress Sophia—Her son, the Elector George Lewis, afterwards King of England—Howard attaches himself to the Elector—Mrs. Howard in favour with the Electress Sophia—Sophia Dorothea of Brunswick-Celle—Her tragic life—Their children—A character-sketch of George Lewis—His devotion to his sister, the Queen of Prussia—His grief at her death—His mistress, Mdlle. von der Schulenburg, afterwards Duchess of Kendal—His half-sister, Baroness von Kielmansegg—The Palace on the Leine at Hanover—Herrenhausen—The Electoral Prince, George Augustus—His consort, Caroline—Their excellent relations—Caroline's influence over the Electoral Prince—A proposal that she should marry the Archduke Charles falls through—Her refusal to enter the Roman Catholic Church—"I, who refused to be an Empress, for the sake of the Protestant religion"—She extends a cordial welcome to all English folk—General Howe—The Duke of Marlborough—James Craggs the younger—Lord Halifax—Lord Dorset—Joseph Addison—Lord Clarendon—John Gay—Lady Cowper—Mrs. Howard and the Electoral Princess—The Howards return to England—Their penniless state until the accession of George I.

HENRIETTA HOBART, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, was descended from a family of considerable antiquity. It is not necessary, however, to trace it further back than Thomas Hobart, of Leyham, Norfolk, whose son James was a person of

importance. James, who bought Hales Hall, Norfolk, was appointed Attorney-General in 1486 by Henry VII., and retained this office until his death twenty-one years later, having been knighted in 1503 on the occasion of the heir to the throne being created Prince of Wales. Sir James's grandson was Thomas, of Plumstead, Norfolk, the father of Henry, most important of all the Hobarts.

Henry was called to the bar in 1584, and apparently made his mark at a comparatively early age, for seven years later he was a Governor of Lincoln's Inn. In February, 1603, he was appointed a sergeant-at-law, and on the accession of James I. received the honour of knighthood. He became Attorney-General in 1606, and was created baronet in 1611. Two years later he was raised to the bench as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in succession to Coke, and was himself succeeded as Attorney-General by Bacon. He was twice disappointed in his hopes of the Woolsack, the first time on the death of Egerton in 1618 when Bacon became Lord Chancellor, the second time on the fall of Bacon in 1621, when, however, no successor was named and the coveted office was put into commission. He died in 1625 at Blicking Hall, Norfolk, which property he had purchased, and which henceforth was the family seat.

From the Chief Justice was descended Sir Henry Hobart, fourth baronet, who, in 1684, married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Joseph Maynard, and grand-daughter (by his first wife) of Sir John Maynard, sometime a Lord Commissioner of the Great Seal in the reign of William III. Of this union there was issue: Henrietta, the subject of this memoir; John, afterwards first Earl of Buckinghamshire; Catherine; and Dorothy, who died unmarried in 1722. Sir Henry was killed in August, 1698, in a duel with Oliver, a brother of Peter le Neve, the Norfolk antiquarian. His wife survived until 1701.

Of the early life of Henrietta Hobart there are no records. Even the date of her birth has not been traced. The *Gentleman's Magazine*,* recording her death on July 26, 1767, gives her age as eighty-six; and recent authorities† accepting this,

* Vol. XXXVII., p. 383.

† J. M. Rigg: *Henrietta Howard, Countess of Suffolk* (Dictionary of National Biography); G.E.C.: *Peerage.*

give 1681 as the year of her birth, which clearly is erroneous, as her parents did not marry until three years later. As against this Hervey* states that she was about forty when George II. ascended the throne in 1727, and Croker,† accepting another account which says she was seventy-nine when she died, thinks that she was born in 1688. As Lady Betty Germaine‡ states that Mrs. Howard was four or five years older than the Hon. George Berkeley,§ and as Horace Walpole remarks that she was very young when she married,‖ Croker's assumption is probably accurate. Her husband was the Hon. Charles Howard,¶ third son of Henry, fifth Earl of Suffolk, who in 1731 succeeded as ninth Earl—a contingency so remote at the time of his marriage that it was not considered.** The bride and bridegroom were remotely connected, for Charles's father had married the widow

* *Memoirs*, I. 57.

The Hon. John Hervey (1696-1743), younger son of John, first Earl of Bristol, known as Lord Hervey from 1723, after death of his elder brother Carr (see p. 38 *note*); entered Parliament 1725; Vice-Chamberlain of George II.'s Household, 1730; created Baron Hervey of Ickworth, 1733; Lord Privy Seal, 1740-1742. His *Memoirs* were published in 1848. He married in 1720 Mary Lepell.

† *Suffolk Correspondence*, I. v.

John Wilson Croker (1780-1851), politician and man of letters, secretary to the Admiralty, 1810-1830; supposed to be the prototype of Rigby in "Coningsby."

‡ Lady Elizabeth Berkeley (1680-1769), second daughter of Charles, second Earl of Berkeley, had in 1706 become the second wife of Sir John Germaine, who died in 1718. She was an intimate friend of Swift; some of the letters exchanged between them are printed in this work.

§ Hon. George Berkeley (1693?-1746), brother of Lady Betty Germaine, and second husband of Lady Suffolk. (See p. 216.)

‖ *Reminiscences* (In Walpole's letters, ed. Cunningham, Vol. I.).

¶ Hon. Charles Howard (1675–1733), entered the army, 1703; Groom of the Bedchamber to George I., 1714–1737; Lieutenant-Colonel of the Coldstream Guards, 1719; succeeded as (ninth) Earl of Suffolk, June 22, 1731; died at Bath, September 28, 1733.

** Henry Howard, fifth Earl of Suffolk (d. 1709), leaving issue, Henry, Edward, Charles and Diana (who married Col. John Pitt). His son, Henry (d. October 2, 1718), succeeded as sixth son, and was succeeded by his only son, Charles William. The seventh Earl died without issue in 1722, and the title went to his uncle Edward, who died unmarried, June 22, 1731, when his brother Charles became ninth Earl.

(the fourth wife) of Sir John Maynard, and Sir John was Henrietta's great-grandfather. They were married at St. Benet's, Paul's Wharf, on March 2, 1706, when presumably the bride was eighteen years of age.

Howard was an objectionable man. Lord Hervey later described him as "wrong-headed, ill-tempered, obstinate, drunken, and extravagant,"* and though it is unlikely that he had developed all these qualities at the time of his marriage, yet they were soon sufficiently in evidence for his wife to see him in his true colours. "She had married herself very young, for love, to a most unamiable man, Mr. Howard: he was sour, dull and sullen," Lord Chesterfield† has written. "How she came to love him, or how he came to love anybody, is unaccountable, unless from a certain fatality which often makes hasty marriages, soon attended by long repentance and aversion. Thus they loved, thus they married, and thus they hated each other for the rest of their lives."‡ In Howard's favour, it must be said that he was in love with the girl: certainly he did not marry for money, since, from the first, the young couple were ill-furnished with worldly goods for persons of their rank. Henrietta's portion was six thousand pounds, of which two-thirds was settled on her and her heirs. What Howard's means were has not transpired, but it is unlikely that they were considerable. Soon all their available cash was spent, and after the birth on New Year's Day, 1707, of their only child, Henry, afterwards tenth Earl of Suffolk, they were at their wits' end for money, the interest of the four thousand pounds in settlement being insufficient to balance their expenses.

It was at this time that they decided to go to Hanover.§ The reasons that urged them to take this step are clear. There, living was much cheaper, and—what probably weighed with them much more—there was the chance that they might improve

* *Memoirs*, I. 54.

† Philip Dormer Stanhope (1694–1773), known after 1713 under the style of Lord Stanhope until 1726, when he succeeded his father as (fourth) Earl of Chesterfield; the author of the "Letters."

‡ *Works* (ed. Mahon), II.

§ Horace Walpole: *Reminiscences*, CXXIX.

their position by ingratiating themselves with the future sovereign of Britain. The journey exhausted their slender financial resources, and, so the story goes, they were in such straits that when, shortly after their arrival, they deemed it expedient to give a dinner to the Hanoverian Ministers, Mrs. Howard had to sell her beautiful hair to meet the cost.*

The outstanding figure at this time at the Hanoverian Court, at least in English eyes, was Sophia, the widow of the late Elector Ernest Augustus. She was a daughter of Frederick, King of Bohemia, and Elizabeth, daughter of James I. of England, and, by the Act of Settlement, heiress-presumptive to the throne of Britain. Her chance of coming into the heritage was, however, small, since in 1710 she was already eighty years old, while Queen Anne was but forty-five. This greatly complicated matters for English folk with an eye to their future interest, since at one and the same time it was essential to pay court to her and highly desirable to be in favour with her eldest son, the Elector George Lewis, who was notoriously on bad terms with his mother. The Howards, however, seem skilfully to have adapted themselves to the situation, for while the husband secured the countenance of the Elector, the wife, we are told, " was extremely acceptable to the intelligent Princess Sophia."†

When his father reigned a marriage had been contemplated between George Lewis and Princess Anne of England, and with this object in view he had been sent to London in the winter of 1680–1681 ; but before matters made much progress, he had been recalled, Hanoverian statesmen having decided that his alliance with Sophia Dorothea, the only child of George William, Duke of Brunswick-Celle, would be more desirable, since this would bring about the union of the neighbouring states under one ruler. This marriage took place in 1682. From the beginning it was far from happy, and it had a tragic ending. All the world knows the story of Sophia Dorothea—the discovery in 1692 of her intrigue with Count Philip Christian von Königsmark, the murder of her lover, the divorce two years later, and

* The date of their arrival in Hanover is fixed as 1710 by a statement of Mrs. Howard (then Lady Suffolk) in 1735 to the Queen, that she had been in the royal service for twenty-five years. (See p. 216.)

† Horace Walpole : *Reminiscences*, CXXXIX.

her incarceration at Ahlden until her death in 1726, a year before that of George Lewis. Of the marriage there was issue, a son and a daughter: George Augustus, afterwards George II., born in 1683; and Sophia Dorothea, born in 1687, who at the age of sixteen married Frederick William, King of Prussia, and survived until 1757.

George Lewis succeeded as Elector of Hanover in 1698, and, on the death of his father-in-law in 1705, became also Duke of Brunswick-Celle. The Duchess of Orleans, who cordially detested him, was perhaps not far wrong when she described him as "a dry and disagreeable gentleman," prone to "suspiciousness, haughtiness, and avarice;" and it must be confessed that he was as unattractive in manner as in appearance. At the same time he had his good points—a fact which is too often overlooked by his English biographers. He had given proofs of personal bravery under fire. He was honest according to his lights, albeit his code was not high. He had humour, too, though it cannot be denied that it usually took a coarse and saturnine turn. He was faithful to those kingly ideals with which he had been imbued, and, above all, he loved his country well, and served her truly. If, as some assert, he, like his father before him, was a bad son, a bad husband, and a bad father—it has been pithily said that he only hated three people in all the world: his mother, his wife, and his son—he was at least capable of returning devotion for devotion. He loved his only sister, Sophia Charlotte, who was seven years his junior, who married in 1684 Frederick of Prussia. Her death at Hanover in 1705 after two days' illness was the greatest blow he ever experienced. "He was in such sorrow," Mahomet, his Turkish attendant,* told Lady Cowper† long afterwards, "that he was five days without eating or drinking or sleeping, but kept walking and wailing all the time, and by hitting his toes against the wain-

* Mahomet and Mustapha were taken prisoners when George Lewis was with the Imperial army in Hungary. When he was wounded in that campaign they tended him so faithfully that he took them into his service at Hanover. Later they went with him to England, where they were appointed Pages of the Backstairs. They were supposed to have much influence with their master.

† Mary (1685–1724), daughter of John Clavering, of Chopwell, Durham, became in 1706 the second wife of William, first Baron, afterwards Earl, Cowper, Lord Chancellor, 1707–1710, 1714–1718. Her *Diary* was published in 1864.

scot (which he ever does when he walks), he had worn out his shoes till his toes came out two inches at the foot." He refused to see anyone, but Mahomet found his brother, Ernest Augustus,* in the palace and brought him to the Elector, who, as soon as he saw him, flung his arms round his neck, and cried: "*Quelle perte venons nous de faire, mon frère. . . . Est-il possible que cette charmante femme nous puisse quitter en si peu de temps?*"†

Besides his sister, the only other woman who inspired the Elector with affection was Ermengarde Melusina von der Schulenburg, a Maid of Honour to the Electress Sophia, who became his mistress, and in 1714 accompanied him to England, where she was raised to the peerage as Duchess of Kendal. Further, it must be ascribed to his credit, that he did not neglect the claims of his father's natural daughter by Clara Elizabeth von Platen (*née* von Meysenbuch), Sophia Charlotte, who, at the age of twenty-four, married in 1700 Baron John Adolphus von Kielmansegg, afterwards Master of the Horse at the Hanoverian Court. For a long time it was believed in this country that the Baroness was the King's mistress, but this was not the case, and in the patent of nobility which created her in 1721 Countess of Leinster in the Irish peerage there is special reference to her royal descent.‡ In the following year he made her Countess of Darlington in the English peerage. Madame von Kielmansegg must have been greatly angered at the aspersions cast upon her, for she was very desirous that her reputation should be regarded as spotless. Presently, when she had come to England, someone told her that the Prince of Wales had said that she had intrigued with all the men at Hanover. "She came to complain

* Ernest Augustus (1674–1728), the youngest brother of George Lewis, lived at Hanover, where, after the accession of George Lewis to the throne of England, he acted as Regent. In 1716 he was appointed to the lucrative Bishopric of Osnabrück, and created Duke of York and Albany. George Lewis' other surviving brother, Maximilian William (d. 1726), was a general in the Emperor's army, and rarely visited his native country.

† Lady Cowper: *Diary*, 149.

‡ The matter is fully discussed by Lady Darlington's descendant, Erich, Graf Kielmansegg, in his Introduction to his edition of the "Briefe des Herzog Ernst August zu Braunschweig-Lüneburg," and it is referred to by Sir A. W. Ward in his monograph on "The Electress Sophia."

to the Princess, who replied, she did not believe the Prince had said so, it not being his custom to speak in that manner," Lady Cowper has recorded. "Madame von Kielmansegg cried, and said it had made her despised, and that many of their acquaintance had left her upon that story; but that her husband had taken all the care he could to vindicate her reputation; and thereupon she drew forth out from her pocket a certificate under her husband's hand, in which he certified, in all the due forms, that she had always been a faithful wife to him, and that he had never had any cause to suspect her honesty. The Princess smiled, and said that she did not doubt it at all, and that all that trouble was very unnecessary, and that it was a very bad reputation that wanted such support."*

Whatever the royal attributes he lacked, at least George Lewis regarded it as incumbent upon him to keep up a considerable state. His Court was far more splendid than might have been expected, and this, too, in spite of the fact that his personal tastes were simple. He loved hunting; walking was a passion with him—to the great grief of those corpulent courtiers who were perforce his companions; and he was given to indulgence in gallantry. The Palace on the river Leine, which gave its name to the royal residence in the city of Hanover, was the state residence; but he spent most of his time at his summer house at Herrenhausen, a mile away.

Herrenhausen was built in 1665 by John Frederick, Duke of Hanover, who was at one and the same time learned, a lover of the arts, and devoted to gaiety not always innocent. He slowly but steadily drank himself to death, and passed away in 1679. His brother Ernest Augustus replaced the original wooden structure by a building of more durable material, which was only completed in 1698, the year of his death. The Palace is wide and low, and consists of two stories and a red-tiled mansard roof. The main building runs round three sides of a great court-yard, with terraces to right and left over the ground floor, and outside, in the centre, a double stone staircase descending with a fine sweep from the first floor. Close by are several other houses, which were occupied by members of the royal family and the officials of the Court; and a vast range of stables, which could

* *Diary*, 68.

accommodate six hundred horses. An Orangery, with frescoes depicting scenes from the Trojan War, painted by Tomaso, was a favourite retreat of the Electress Sophia. The great feature of the place are the gardens, laid out by Lenôtre, the gardener of Louis XIV., in the Dutch-French style, of which, after Versailles and Schönbrunn, they are said to be the best example. The Great Garden presents a marked contrast to the adjacent Georg-Garden, where nature is allowed, or by subtle art appears to be allowed, free sway. The formal French garden has three broad avenues of lime trees, along the sides of which are thick, closely-cropped hornbeam hedges, eight feet high, and branching off at regular intervals at right angles. At the south-west and south-east corners of the avenues are two pavilions in the form of Roman temples. Everywhere there are mythological pictures in stone, carp-ponds, waterfalls, and fountains; and, facing the Palace, the view from which is open to the horizon, is a vast, broad stretch of turf, with flower beds on either side. Ernest Augustus enclosed the ground with a moat eighty-six feet wide, and his son introduced gondolas upon the water. George Lewis, indeed, interested himself in beautifying the place, and spent much time and money in so doing. He purchased in Paris twenty-three antique busts of the Roman Emperors, and placed them in the Orangery, and he designed an open-air theatre, with a semi-circular stone arena for the spectators. The ground that served as a stage was raised, two Bacchantes mark the proscenium, and the wings are formed of hedges at right angles, each flanked by a statue. In 1716 he sent for William Benson* to carry out Leibnitz's plan for the famous waterworks, which throw the water higher even than the celebrated fountain at St. Cloud; and in 1724 he laid out the famous Herrenhausen Allee, which stretches to the city, and consists of one avenue of lime trees sixty feet wide, flanked by two others, each twenty feet wide, and reserved respectively for driving, riding and walking.

The great age of the Electress Sophia made it ever more likely that not she but George Lewis would be the next English sovereign, and this, consequently, brought into prominence his

* William Benson (1682–1754), of Wilbury House, Wiltshire, politician; Surveyor-General of Works, 1715, a patron of art and letters.

heir, George Augustus, the Electoral Prince. He had been brought up by his mother until she was divorced in 1694, when he was in his twelfth year ; and afterwards by his grandparents, Ernest Augustus and Sophia. In September, 1705, he married (Wilhelmina) Caroline, daughter of John Frederick, Margrave of Brandenburg-Anspach, who had been born in the same year as her consort. Possessed of great personal attractions, which even an attack of smallpox two years after her marriage only slightly impaired, she won and held George Augustus's love and respect all the days of her life. Also from the outset her wider knowledge of affairs, backed by a considerable intelligence, gave her an influence over him which she never lost. Her father had died in 1687, and five years later her mother, Eleanora Erdmuth Louisa, daughter of John George, Duke of Saxe-Eisenach, married John George IV., Elector of Saxony. Caroline went to Dresden with her mother, and remained there until 1696, when, her mother dying, she spent some years at Berlin with her guardian Frederick III., Elector of Brandenburg (afterwards Frederick I., King of Prussia), and his consort, Sophia Charlotte, daughter of the Electress Sophia, who had inherited the intellectual gifts of her mother, and who took much interest in the upbringing of the girl. It was proposed that Caroline should marry the Archduke Charles, but this necessitated conversion to the Roman Catholic Church, and against this Caroline protested so vigorously that the projected alliance was abandoned.

In later days Caroline was very proud of her adherence to the Protestant faith. "This day," Lady Cowper wrote in her "Diary," December 23, 1714, "the Bishop of London* waited on my Mistress, and desired Mrs. Howard to go in to the Princess, and say he thought it his duty to wait upon her, to satisfy her in any doubts or scruples she might have in regard to our religion, and to explain anything to her which she did not comprehend. She was a little nettled when Mrs. Howard delivered this message to her, and said : 'Send him away civilly ; though he is very impertinent to suppose that I, who refused to be Empress for the sake of the Protestant religion, don't under-

* John Robinson (1650–1723), D.D., 1696 ; Dean of Windsor, 1709 ; Bishop of Bristol, 1710 ; Bishop of London, 1714–1723.

stand it fully.' " Gay,* with his true Court flunkeyism, alluded to this incident in his " Letter to a Lady " :

> " *The pomp of titles easy faith might shake,*
> *She scorn'd an empire for religion's sake :*
> *For this on earth the British Crown was giv'n,*
> *And an immortal crown decreed in Heaven.*"

As a matter of fact, however, when this marriage was contemplated there was no reason whatever to dream that the Archduke would ever wear the imperial purple as Charles VI. Indeed, the heir to the Electorate of Hanover, with the kingdom of Britain in the future, was at the time a far more eligible *parti*.

Caroline, who was ambitious, soon realized the immense importance of the succession of the House of Hanover to the throne of Britain—a fact which was continually impressed on her by the Electress Sophia, whose only wish was to live long enough to die as Queen of England. There was, of course, always the possibility that, on the death of Anne, the Jacobite party might be strong enough to install the Pretender ; and, to counteract any such attempt, Caroline endeavoured to bind to the family interest all the English folk she met. She cultivated the acquaintance of General Howe,† who was the British Minister at the Court of Hanover until his death in 1709, and of Isaac D'Alais, who from that date until Queen Anne passed away five years later was in charge of the British Mission ; and she received with great kindness all visitors from the country of which she hoped one day to be queen. The Duke of Marlborough‡ could always count on a gracious reception from her, though it is doubtful if she, more than anyone else, trusted his protestations ; and so could James Craggs the younger.§ No one could have met with a more cordial welcome than Lord

* John Gay (1685–1732), poet and dramatist.

† Lieutenant-General Emanuel Scrope Howe (d. 1709), brother of Scrope, first Viscount Howe ; Groom of the Bedchamber to William III. ; Envoy-Extraordinary to Hanover, 1705–1709. His daughter Sophia was a Maid of Honour to Caroline when Princess of Wales.

‡ John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722).

§ James Craggs the younger (1686–1721), afterwards Secretary of State.

Halifax,* when he, accompanied by Lord Dorset† and Joseph Addison,‡ arrived in 1711 to invest the Electoral Prince with the Order of the Garter ; and very attentive she was to Lord Clarendon,§ and to his secretary, John Gay, when in July of that year he came on a mission to convey to the Court the condolences of Queen Anne on the death of the Electress Sophia. With Lady Cowper, who had been more than once to Hanover, she corresponded for four years ; and in the general favour extended to the English, Mrs. Howard participated. Mrs. Howard remained at Hanover until 1713, when she and her husband returned to England.

Though they had been treated with much kindness during the years they had resided at the German Court, and had been in favour with the Elector and his family, the Howards' state was still desperate. It is true that the Electress Sophia had given a promise and a letter to Lady Frederica Schomberg ‖ that should she live to be queen of England she would provide for Mrs. Howard by appointing her a Woman of the Bedchamber,¶ and it seems to have been understood that Caroline would carry out this undertaking ; and there is no doubt that the Elector had given Howard to understand that he should in due course be nominated a Groom of the Bedchamber ; but these prospects, while pleasing, were of no value while Anne sat on the throne of England.

From depositions taken by Mrs. Howard's lawyer in November, 1727, when there was trouble between husband and wife,

* Charles Montagu, Baron Halifax (1661–1715), created Earl of Halifax after the accession of George I. ; First Lord of the Treasury, 1697–1699, and again 1714–1715.

† Lionel Cranfield Saville, seventh Earl of Dorset (1688–1765), created Duke of Dorset, 1720 ; Groom of the Stole, 1714–1719 ; Lord Steward of the Household, 1725–1730 ; Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, 1730–1737 ; again Lord Steward, 1737-1745 ; Lord President of the Council, 1745–1751 ; again Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 1751–1754 ; Master of the Horse, 1755-1757.

‡ Joseph Addison (1672–1719), man of letters and statesman.

§ Edward Hyde, third Earl of Clarendon (1661–1724).

‖ Lady Frederica Schomberg (d. 1751), daughter of Meindhardt, third Duke of Schomberg. She married (1) Robert D'Arcy, third Earl of Holderness, who died in 1722, and (2) Benjamin Mildmay, third Earl Fitzwalter.

¶ Lady Cowper : *Diary*, 25.

it appears that the Howards, after their return from Hanover, lived in London in the humblest circumstances. They had lodgings in the neighbourhood of Golden Square, where, as Howard was in danger of arrest for debt, they hid their identity under the name of Smith ; and, as they could not afford to keep a servant, Mrs. Howard had to do all the work for herself, her husband, and the child. Their destitution lasted until the accession of George I., when the promises made to them were duly redeemed.

CHAPTER II

THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S

1714–1718

Death of the Electress Sophia—Death of Queen Anne—Accession of George I.—Leaving Hanover distasteful to him—His love of his Electorate—His arrival in England, with the Prince of Wales—The Princess of Wales follows them—His Hanoverian suite accompanies him—Mdlle. von der Schulenburg—Baroness von Kielmansegg—Their rapacity—Members of the King's Household—Duke of Devonshire—Lord Cholmondeley—Hugh Boscawen—Duke of Shrewsbury—Thomas Coke—Lord Dorset—Duke of Somerset—Duke of Montagu—Lord Godolphin—Lord Radnor—Duke of St. Albans—The Prince of Wales and the royal bastards——Duke of Northumberland—Duchess of Bolton—Duchess of Buckingham—Lord Deloraine—The antagonism between the Hanoverians and the English—The popularity of the Prince and Princess of Wales—The King's dislike of his daughter-in-law—His hatred of his son—Duke of Argyll—The Prince appointed Regent during his father's visit to Hanover in 1716-1717—The quarrel between the King and the Prince—Mrs. Howard's account of the incident—The Prince ordered to leave St. James's—The Princess accompanies him—"An Excellent New Ballad"—The King's spite—His impotent rage—The reconciliation two years later—Rejoicings on that auspicious occasion.

THE Electress Sophia died at Herrenhausen on June 8, 1714, and George Lewis became heir-presumptive to the throne of Britain. On August 1, Queen Anne died, and he became King under the style of George I. He received the news without elation. Rather it depressed him. Hanover gave him all he wanted, and at the age of fifty-four he felt reluctant to abandon his home, and live in a foreign land. It had been his mother's most cherished dream to sit on her grandfather's throne: for him the prospect had always been singularly devoid of attraction. Had the dignity which had now come to him been such as would have added lustre to his beloved country, not a murmur would have escaped him—indeed, he would have embraced the opportunity; but the sovereignty of Britain could

not but expose the comparative insignificance of his ancestral State. Even his personal importance would scarcely be enhanced by the succession, for whereas in Hanover it was the Elector first and the rest nowhere, in England the supremacy of the monarch was kept within bounds at once by a powerful and wealthy aristocracy and a liberty-loving people. He had been only once to the country over which he was now called to rule. He could not speak the language of his new subjects, or even understand it. " My father,"* Horace Walpole has written, " brushed up his old Latin, to use a phrase of Queen Elizabeth, in order to converse with the first Hanoverian sovereign." What George had seen of the English had certainly not endeared them to him. They had come to Hanover in ever-increasing numbers as the years passed, but almost invariably in pursuance of political intrigue, or in search of future personal aggrandisement. He knew full well—indeed, there had been no attempt to disguise the fact—that he was called to England, not for his own benefit, but simply because it was to the advantage of that country. While fully realizing the position, he, to do him justice, never hesitated, and he came to England because he thought it his duty to do so. If when he was there he, so far as lay in his power, subordinated the interests of Britain to those of Hanover—if to annex Bremen and Verden to his continental State he did not hesitate to risk plunging his new kingdom into war—who shall blame him ?

George set out from Hanover on the last day of August, 1714, and entered London in state on September 20. The Electoral Prince accompanied him, and was at once created by letters patent Prince of Wales. As a Jacobite rising was not without the bounds of possibility, the Electoral Princess had not accompanied her consort ; but as the danger of this passed, she followed him, and, with her two elder daughters,† arrived on

* Robert Walpole (1676–1745), entered Parliament in 1701, and held minor posts, 1708-1711 ; Paymaster of the Forces, 1714, Prime Minister, 1715–1717, 1721–1742 ; Knight of the Garter, 1726 ; created Earl of Orford, 1742.

† Anne (1709–1759), afterwards Princess Royal, who in 1734 married the Prince of Orange ; and Amelia (1710–1786), who never married. Frederick Lewis (1707–1751), afterwards Prince of Wales, and Caroline (1713–1757), remained at Hanover.

October 16, in time to be present at the coronation, which took place four days later.

Though debarred, by the provisions of the Act of Settlement, from bestowing peerages on his fellow-countrymen, or giving them places in the British Administration or Household, there was, of course, nothing to prevent the King from surrounding himself with whom he chose, and of this liberty he took full advantage. He brought with him a large political staff, including Bernstorff, Schlitz-Görtz, Hattorf, and Robethon*—Bothmar was already in England ; and, in addition, sixty-three members of his Hanoverian Household—Baron John George von Kielmansegg, Master of the Horse ; Count Ernest Augustus von Platen, son of the late Prime Minister ; Baron Christian Ulrich von Hardenburg, Marshal of the Court ; Brauns, a Lutheran minister ; Steigerdall, Chapuzeau, Röthe, Jäger, and other physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries ; five body-servants, including his two Turkish attendants ; four pages, two trumpeters, a carrier, twelve footmen, eighteen cooks, three cellarmen, two housemaids, and a washerwoman.

As a matter of course, Mademoiselle von der Schulenburg and the Baroness von Kielmansegg accompanied the King. Their reception in this country was far from pleasing to them ; in some places they were actually hooted by the populace. " Good people, why do you abuse us ? We come for all your goods," cried the royal mistress, on one occasion. " Yes, damn you," retorted a witty rascal in the crowd, " and for all our chattels too." Their personal appearance filled the English with disgust. " Look at that mawkin, and think of her being my son's passion,"† the Electress Sophia had said to Mrs. Howard of her Maid of Honour ; and in this country she was promptly nicknamed " the Maypole," in contradiction to the Baroness, who was known as " the Elephant." Of the latter Horace Walpole has supplied a singularly unflattering portrait. " I remember as a boy being terrified at her enormous figure," he wrote in his " Reminiscences." " The fierce black eyes, large and rolling beneath two lofty arched eyebrows, two acres of cheeks spread with crimson, an ocean of neck that over-

* Jean de Robethon (d. 1722), " domestic secretary " to George I.

† Horace Walpole : *Reminiscences*, CX.

flowed, and was not distinguished from the lower part of her body, and no part of it restrained by stays. No wonder that a child dreaded such an ogre." She must indeed have made an impression upon his childish mind since, after more than three score years, he could recall his first sight of her; but the "cheeks spread with crimson" was a commonplace at Hanover. "All the women," Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote after a visit to that city in 1716, "have literally rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eye-brows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. These perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle-light; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much as Mrs. Salmon's [wax-work] Court of Great Britain, and are in as much danger of melting away by too near approaching the fire, which they for that reason carefully avoid, though it is now such cold weather that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial."*

Both the King's relative and his mistress were at one in their desire to amass a fortune, and from the first they were eager to use their influence to secure places for those who were willing to pay them for so doing. The trade began before they had been many months in this country. "Mr. Benson,"† Lady Cowper noted in her "Diary," December 13, 1714, "came in the evening, much mortified with being left out of the Board of Trade, where Mr. Chetwynd‡ had got in by Madame Kielmansegg's interest, he having given her (as he told me he is well assured) five hundred guineas down, and is to pay her a pension of two hundred pounds per annum as long as he has the place; and I have since learnt from another hand that he gave her also the fine brilliant ear-rings which she wears, it being certain she never had any such jewels abroad." The rapacity of these women knew no bounds, and as for "the Schulenburg," Robert Walpole declared that "she would have sold the King's honour for a shilling advance

* *Letters* (ed. Thomas), I. 137.

† Robert Benson (1676–1731), Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1711; created Baron Bingley, 1713.

‡ John Chetwynd, a Commissioner of Trade and Plantations, 1714–1728.

to the best bidder."* The King was apparently always anxious to aid and abet them, and when in 1715 he dismissed the Duke of Somerset† from the office of Master of the Horse, he did not fill up the place, but made over the salary to his mistress, whom in the following year he created Duchess of Munster in the peerage of Ireland, and in 1719 Duchess of Kendal.

The official members of the King's Court were perforce chosen from among his new subjects. The Duke of Devonshire‡ was Lord Steward, Lord Cholmondeley§, Treasurer, and Hugh Boscawen,|| Comptroller of the Household ; the Duke of Shrewsbury¶ retained the office of Lord Chamberlain, and Thomas Coke,** that of Vice-Chamberlain ; Lord Dorset was appointed Groom of the Stole, and the Duke of Somerset Master of the Horse ; the Duke of Montagu,†† Master of the Great Wardrobe, Lord Godolphin,‡‡ Cofferer of the Household, and Lord Radnor,§§

* Coxe : *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, I. 551.

† Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset (1662–1748), commonly called "The Proud Duke." He was dismissed because of his vigorous protest when refused permission to bail his son-in-law, Sir William Wyndham, who was suspected of corresponding with the Pretender.

‡ William Cavendish, second Duke of Devonshire (1673?–1729).

§ Hugh Cholmondeley, first Earl of Cholmondeley (d. 1724), was Treasurer of the Household under Queen Anne, 1708–1713. Restored to this place by George I., he held the office until his death.

|| Hugh Boscawen (d. 1734), Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster 1708 ; Comptroller of the Household, 1714–1720 ; joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, 1717–1734 ; raised to the peerage as Viscount Falmouth, 1720.

¶ Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury (1660–1718), held high political and diplomatic office under William III. and Anne ; on July 30, 1714, two days before Anne's death, became Lord High Treasurer, by which action he did much towards ensuring the peaceful accession of George I. The King retained him in his office of Lord Chamberlain, which he resigned in 1715.

** Thomas Coke, of Holkham (d. 1759), created Baron Lovell, 1728, and Earl of Leicester, 1744.

†† John Montagu, second Duke of Montagu (1688–1749) ; on the death of his father, Ralph, first Duke of Montagu, in 1709, he succeeded him as Master of the Great Wardrobe, which place he held for life. He was made Grand Master of the Order of the Bath, 1725 ; and appointed Master-General of the Ordnance, 1740. His town residence, Montagu House, was opened in 1759 as the British Museum.

‡‡ Francis Godolphin, second Earl of Godolphin (1678–1766), Cofferer of the Household, 1704-1711, 1714–1723 ; Lord Privy Seal, 1735-1740.

§§ Charles Bodvile Robartes, second Earl of Radnor (1660–1723), Treasurer of the Household, 1714–1720.

Treasurer of the Chamber. The Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners (since known as the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms), who was in attendance on state occasions, was the Duke of St. Albans, a son of Charles II. by Nell Gwyn. A pretty story is told concerning the circumstances under which the peerage was bestowed upon him. When Charles was visiting his mistress, she one day called to the little boy : " Come hither, you little bastard, and speak to your father." " Nay, Nelly," the King protested, " do not give the child such a name." " Your Majesty has given me no other name by which I may call him," said the mother, no doubt having in mind the fact that he had recently created his son by Louise de Kéroualle Duke of Richmond. Charles took the hint, at once gave the boy the surname of Beauclerk and the title of Earl of Burford, and in 1685 made him Duke of St. Albans. The Duke was only one of a numerous band of illegitimate children of royalty and their descendants which was to be found at the Court of George I. and included the Duke of Northumberland,* the Duchess of Bolton,† the Duchess of Buckingham,‡ and Lord Deloraine.§ " One can't move here for bastards," the Prince of Wales said angrily one day, when the Duke of Northumberland touched him. " Sir, my father was as great a King as yours," retorted his Grace, " and as for our mothers, the less we say about them the better."‖

According to all accounts, the Court of George I. was dull beyond compare, at least in the eyes of the English, and it was

* George Fitzroy, first Duke of Northumberland of the second creation (1665–1716), son of Charles II. by Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland.

† Henrietta Crofts (d. 1730), daughter of James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, by Eleanor, younger daughter of Sir Robert Needham, of Lambeth, and sister of the famous beauty, Jane Myddelton, became in 1697 the third wife of Charles Paulet, second Duke of Bolton.

‡ Lady Catherine Darnley (d. 1743), daughter of James II. by Catherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester, married in 1699 James Annesley, third Earl of Anglesea, whom she divorced two years later. In 1706 she became the third wife of the Duke of Buckingham.

§ Henry Scott, Earl of Deloraine (1676–1730), son of James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, and Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch. He is mentioned by Young, in " Night Thoughts " :

" Stanhope in wit, in breeding Deloraine."

‖ *Reliquiæ Herncanæ.*

enlivened only by the antagonism of the Germans, who held undisputed sway, and the English, who resented their presence accordingly. The dislike was, indeed, mutual; and many were the passages of arms that took place between the members of the rival nationalities. "Countess Bückeburg* said," Lady Cowper has recorded, "that the English women did not look like women of quality, but made themselves look as pitifully and as sneakingly as they could; that they hold their heads down, and look always in a fright, whereas those that are foreigners hold up their heads and hold out their breasts, and make themselves look as great and stately as they can, and more nobly and more like quality than the others. To which Lady Deloraine† replied, 'We show our quality by our birth and titles, madam, and not by sticking out our bosoms.'"‡ Fuel was poured on the flame by the Prince of Wales's open and declared preference for England over Hanover. "Dined with Mrs. Clayton,§ Mrs. Wallop,‖ Lady Herbert,¶ Miss Dyve,**

* The wife of Count von Lippe and Bückeburg had been in the Household of the Electress Sophia. She accompanied the Princess to England as an extra Lady of the Bedchamber, and in 1719 was in receipt of a pension of five hundred pounds a year from the Prince of Wales. Her son, Albert Wolfgang, Count von Lippe, a sovereign prince, married in 1721 Margaret Gertrude (1703–1773), the younger daughter of the Duchess of Kendal by George I. The Countess Bückeburg spent her later years at Stadthaguen, from where in 1731 and 1732 she wrote to Mrs. Howard, signing herself, Sophie de Schaumbourg and Lippe.

† Anne (d. 1720), daughter of William Duncombe, of Battlesden, Bedfordshire, and first wife of Henry Scott, Earl of Deloraine. (See p. 19.)

‡ *Diary*, April 4, 1716; p. 102.

§ A Woman of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales. (See p. 39.)

‖ Alicia, daughter and co-heiress of William Borlase, of Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire, married John Wallop, of Farleigh-Wallop, Hampshire. Their third son, John (1690–1762), was created Viscount Lymington in 1720, and Earl of Portsmouth in 1743.

¶ Probably Mary, a daughter of "Speaker" Smith and the wife of the Hon. Robert Sawyer Herbert, second son of Thomas, eighth Earl of Pembroke, who, through his mother, inherited in 1692 the estate of his grandfather, Sir Robert Sawyer, Attorney-General in 1681, and senior counsel for the seven Bishops in 1688.

** Dorothy Dyve, a niece of Mrs. Clayton. She was later appointed, by her aunt's influence, Maid of Honour to Queen Charlotte. She married Richard Chenevix (1698–1779), Bishop of Killaloe, 1745–1746; Bishop of Waterford, 1746–1779.

Mrs. Howard, Mademoiselle Schütz,* Monsieur Schütz,† etc.," Lady Cowper noted another day. " Mrs. Clayton is rapturous at all the kind things the Prince had been saying of the English —that he thought them the best, the handsomest, the best-shaped, the best-natured, and lovingest people in the world, and that if anybody would make their court to him, it must be by telling him he was like an Englishman. This did not at all please the foreigners at our table ; they could not contain themselves, but fell into the violentest, silliest, ill-mannered invective against the English that ever was heard, and nothing could make Monsieur Schütz believe there was one handsome woman in England."‡ Since feeling ran so high, it is not surprising that those English folk who had no places at Court, and who had no axe of their own to grind, so far as possible absented themselves, and appeared only on formal occasions.

George I. cared nothing for popularity in England, but he did not on that account resent any the less bitterly the favour with which the Heir-apparent and his Consort were regarded. For his daughter-in-law, whose tastes were so different from his, he never had any liking, and after his accession it became his habit to speak of her to his intimates as " cette diablesse Madame la Princesse." For his son he had that intense hatred which all Hanoverian sovereigns had for their heirs—which George II. had for Frederick, Prince of Wales ; which George III. had for " The First Gentleman of Europe." In this particular case, it is said to have been aggravated by quarrels arising out of the Prince's belief in the innocence of his mother, in whose care he had been until he was eleven years old, and by

* Mademoiselle Schütz, a relation of Baron von Schütz (see next note), and a niece of Baron von Bernstorff, came to England in 1715. Lady Cowper described her in her " Diary " (p. 59). " She was a pretty woman, and had good qualities, but withal was so assuming that she had made herself mightily disliked at Court. We had been long and intimately acquainted, so that I saw her often ; but the Prince had expressed so great a dislike of her to me, that I was in a good deal of pain how to carry myself between them." Later Lady Cowper remarks : " Mademoiselle Schütz was so impertinent, she made me quite peevish." (*Ibid.* 88.)

† Baron von Schütz, a nephew of Bernstorff, was Hanoverian Minister at the Court of Queen Anne. His elder son, Augustus, was given a post in the Household of the Prince of Wales. (See p. 37.)

‡ *Diary*, March 22, 1716 ; p. 99.

his openly-expressed anger and indignation at the way in which she had been treated. The story goes that he made at least one abortive attempt to see her at Ahlden, and that it was his intention, should she survive her husband, to bring her to England as Queen-Dowager.

The King could not do much to injure his son, but he did what he might whenever he could. When Parliament voted the Heir-apparent one hundred thousand pounds a year, the King proposed that it should be an allowance dependent upon his royal pleasure; his failure to effect this only embittered him the more. So high did the feeling run, that to be a friend of the Prince was to ensure disgrace at Court. Though the removal of the Duke of Argyll* from all his posts after his suppression of the rebellion of '15 was no doubt partly due to the machinations of his inveterate foes, the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Sunderland,† it is more than probable that the determining factor in the King's mind was the Duke being Groom of the Stole to, and an intimate companion of, his son. Indeed, when George I. was about to visit Hanover in July, 1716, his reluctant consent to the appointment of the Prince during his absence was coupled with the condition that his Royal Highness should sever his connection with the Duke of Argyll—a compact, by the way, which was ignored the moment the King left the country.

It must be admitted that the conduct of the Prince as Regent was not such as to endear him to a father who was already inordinately jealous of him. He soon found to his delight that he was more popular in England than the King. The public, already irritated by the preponderance of the foreign element at Court, resented the King's trip to Hanover within two years of his accession to the British throne; and, indeed, it never accustomed itself to these periodical absences. On one of these occasions much laughter was caused by a paper posted by a merry wag on the Royal Exchange, stating, "It is reported that his Hanoverian Majesty designs to visit his British dominions for three months in the spring."‡ While the King's immediate

* John Campbell, second Duke of Argyll (1678–1743).

† Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland (1674–1722), Secretary of State, 1706–1710; Lord Privy Seal, 1715-1718; First Lord of the Treasury, 1718–1721.

‡ Hervey; *Memoirs*, II. 364.

GEORGE II., AS PRINCE OF WALES.
After a portrait by John Shacketon.

[*To face p.* 22.

entourage was Hanoverian, the circle of the Prince and Princess was almost exclusively drawn from their future subjects; and it was reported that he had declared, "I have not a drop of blood in my veins which is not English." Further, he had to his credit a reputation for bravery won at Oudenarde and on other fields of battle. All these things told in his favour, and he hastened to improve the shining hour. He made a royal progress from London to Hampshire, and reviewed the troops and the fleet at Portsmouth, where, as in all other places, he was received with great enthusiasm by vast crowds. His coolness when an assassin forced his way into the Royal Box at Drury Lane further increased his popularity. The King, on his return, vowed that never again should his son represent him, and during his subsequent visits to Hanover the Government was placed in the hands of Lords Justices.

The quarrel came to a head after the Princess gave birth at St. James's to a son, George William, on November 2, 1717. The King was to be one of the godfathers, and the Prince desired that his uncle, the Duke of York, should be the other. The King, however, insisted that the second sponsor should be the Duke of Newcastle,* with whom the Prince was notoriously on bad terms. After the ceremony, the Prince shook his fist in the face of the Duke of Newcastle, and cried, "You are a rascal, but I should find you"—meaning, there is no doubt, "I will be equal with you for this." The King, however, chose to interpret this as indicating an intention to force a duel on the unoffending nobleman, and had his son confined to his apartments. "What was my astonishment," Mrs. Howard told Horace Walpole long afterwards, "when going to the Princess's next morning, the yeomen in the guard-chamber pointed their halberts at my breast, and told me I must not pass. I urged that it was my duty to attend the Princess; they said, 'No matter, I must not pass that way.' In one word, the King had been so provoked at the Prince's outrage in his presence, that it had been determined to put a still greater insult on his Royal Highness. His threat to the Duke was

* Thomas Pelham-Holles, first Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1693–1768), Lord Chamberlain, 1717–1724; Secretary of State, 1724–1754; First Lord of the Treasury, 1754-1756; Lord Privy Seal, 1765–1766.

pretended to be understood as a challenge, and to prevent a duel he had actually been put under arrest. As if a Prince of Wales would stoop to fight with a subject! The arrest was soon taken off, but at night the Prince and Princess were ordered to leave the Palace."* As a matter of fact, the Princess was given her choice of staying at St. James's with the children, or of departing with her husband and leaving them in the care of their grandfather. She chose the latter alternative. The affair, which created a great stir, furnished an admirable subject for a contemporary rhymester.

AN EXCELLENT NEW BALLAD

(To the tune of "Chevy Chase.")

God prosper long our noble King,
His Turks and Germans all!
A woeful christ'ning late there did
In James's House befal.
With a fa la la la la.

To name a child with might and main
Newcastle took his way;
We all may rue the child was born
Who christened was that day.

His sturdy sire, the Prince of Wales,
A vow to God did make,
That if he dared his child to name,
His heart full sore shou'd ake.

But on a day straight to the Court
This Duke came with a Staff;
Oh, how the Prince did stamp and stare
At which this Duke did laugh.

Hereat the Prince did wax full wroth,
E'en in his father's hall;
"I'll be reveng'd on thee," he said,
"Thou rogue and eke rascal."

* Walpole: *Reminiscences.*

The Duke ran straightway to the King,
Complaining of his son;
And then the King sent three Dukes more,
To know what he had done.

Then quoth the Prince, "He is a rogue,
Against my will to stand."
Then Roxb'ro' said, "Great Sir, indeed,*
He did it by command."

"By God thou liest! I know thy heart,
And thy presumption, too;"
And then he added words of wrath,
So to the King they flew.

"We saw the Prince," quoth Roxb'ro'.—"Bon!"
"T' appease him we're not able;
He gave me, Sir, the lie."—"Comment?"
"And bid us go——"—"Diable!"

The King then took his gray goose-quill,
And dip'd it o'er in gall;
And by Master Vice-Chamberlain†
He sent to him this scrawl:

"Take hence yourself, and eke your spouse,
Your maidens and your men,
Your trunks and all your trumpery,
Except your childeren."

. . . . . .

The Prince secured with muckle haste
Th' artillery commission,
And by him trudged full many a maid,
But no one politician.

* John Ker, first Duke of Roxburgh (d. 1701), Secretary of State for Scotland, 716–1725.

† Thomas Coke. (See p. 18.)

Up leapt Lepell and frisk'd away*
As if she ran on wheels :
Miss Meadows† made a woeful face,
Miss Howe‡ . . . her heels.

But Bellenden§ must needs but praise,
Who, as down-stairs she jumps,
Sings " O'er the hills and far away,"
Despising doleful dumps.

. . . . . .

Then up the street they took their way
And knocked up good Lord Grantham ;‖
Higgledy-piggledy they lay,
And all went rantum scantum.

Now sire and son had play'd their part,
What could befal beside ?
Why, the poor babe took this to heart,
Kick'd up its heels, and dy'd.

God grant this land may profit reap
From all this silly pother,
And send these fools may ne'er agree
'Till they are at H[anove]r.

It was now war, on the King's part, to the knife. He decreed that the Prince and Princess should be treated as private persons, and that no guard of honour should be allotted them ; and he took charge of their children, as by law he was entitled. Presently he announced that those persons who attended the receptions of the Prince and Princess would not be received

* A Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales.

† A Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales.

‡ A Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales.

§ A Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales.

‖ Henry (d. 1754), second son of General Henry Nassau, Count d'Auverquerque ; created Earl of Grantham, 1698.

The Prince and Princess of Wales stayed at his house in Arlington Street until they acquired a town residence.

at Court. Beyond this, however, all his attempts to injure them failed. He expressed the wish to be given control of the Prince's income, and a Bill was actually drafted, but not proceeded with, mainly owing to the opposition of Lord Chancellor Cowper, who was doubtful if Parliament would pass the measure. He then proposed that at his death the connection between England and Hanover should be severed, and the Electorate pass to another branch of his family ; and he only let this drop when it was pointed out to him that any arguments which could be adduced in favour of this scheme would apply with equal force to a measure for immediate partition. He stopped short only of accepting a plan, submitted by Lord Berkeley,* to kidnap the Prince and transport him to America.

The estrangement lasted more than two years. Then political considerations made imperative a show of reconciliation. Lord Sunderland found that it was essential to strengthen the Administration, which could only be done effectively by taking in Lord Townshend† and Walpole, and Walpole made it a condition of his acceptance of office that the breach between the King and the Heir-apparent should be mended. Walpole, on April 9, 1720, went to the Princess to open negotiations to this end ; and she sent him to Lord Cowper. The first terms agreed upon between the statesmen were that the Princess should have her children, that the Prince should write a submissive letter to the King, and that the Prince and Princess should return to St. James's. The last clause was, however, abandoned. " The Prince and Princess not to live in the house with the King," Lady Cowper wrote. " The true reason because the King won't bear it—so it is artfully made a merit to the Prince to be suffered to stay where he is."‡

The programme of the reconciliation was carefully planned, and carried through without a hitch. " At twelve [on St.

* James Berkeley, third Earl of Berkeley (1680–1736), First Lord of the Admiralty, 1717–1727.

† Charles Townshend, second Viscount Townshend (1674–1738), Secretary of State, 1714-1716. He was now made President of the Council. He was again Secretary of State from 1721-1730. He was brother-in-law of Robert Walpole.

‡ *Diary*, 145.

George's Day]," Lady Cowper has recorded, "Lord Lumley* waited upon the King with the Prince of Wales's letter, and Mr. Craggs [the younger] went back with him to the Prince with a message from the King. The Prince took his chair, and went to St. James's, where he saw the King in his Closet. The Prince made him a short compliment, saying it had been great grief to him to have been in his displeasure so long; that he was infinitely obliged to his Majesty for this permission of waiting on him, and that he hoped the rest of his life would be such as the King would never have cause to complain of. The King was much dismayed, pale, and could not speak to be heard but by broken sentences, and said several times, '*Votre conduite—votre conduite;*' but the Prince said he could not hear distinctly anything but those words. The Prince went after he had stayed about five minutes in the Closet."† His Royal Highness left St. James's with a military escort, and for the first time sentries were posted at Leicester House. The next day the Prince and Princess attended the *levée*. Much joy was expressed by the populace, which, of course, did not know that the feelings of the King and the Heir-apparent for one another had not undergone any change.

"I suppose you have had no small share in the joy this happy reconciliation has occasioned," the Hon. Mrs. Molesworth‡ wrote to Mrs. Howard, April 31, 1720. "Mr. Molesworth testified his zeal at the expense of his sobriety; for he was not satisfied to make his men drunk, but got drunk himself, and it was no fault of his that I was not so too; in short, he celebrated the news in a manner that alarmed the country people, for after he had made them ring the bells all day, in the evening he made his troop draw up before his lodging and he at the head of them, and began the King and Prince's healths together, and then the princess, and after, the rest of the royal family; at every health he made his troop fire round a volley of shot: he invited several

* Richard Lumley (d. 1740), second son of Richard, fourth Earl of Scarborough. He was raised to the peerage in March, 1714, and succeeded as (second) Earl of Scarborough in 1721.

† *Diary*, 142.

‡ Elizabeth (d. 1725), daughter of James Welwood, M.D., and the wife of Captain the Hon. Walter Molesworth, fifth son of Robert, first Viscount Molesworth.

gentlemen to pledge these healths, and when they had done they threw the glasses over their heads. When this was done he carried them all with him to drink a bowl of punch. As to his men, after they had despatched a barrel of ale they thought themselves not glad enough, and he, to make them so, went amongst them and gave them money to finish in wine. He is at present a little disordered with that night's work."*

More than one bard broke out into verse to celebrate this auspicious occasion, but a single example will suffice :

" So now our great, august, heroic Prince
Pays low his mighty Sire obedience.
Both gloriously united firmly stand,
E'en faction dies within a factious land.
Though late with clouds o'ercast this happy isle,
Britain and Europe now begin to smile.
Though fogs and mists obscure our hemisphere,
The noble planets now again appear.
The sun, which long behind a cloud concealed
Was lately, shines with radiant beams revealed.
A Caroline at St. James's seen,
Great is her virtue who is beauty's queen ;
A Prince whose wisdom in retirement seen
I dare presage the future times shall own
Will make him glorious on a British throne.
At this each loyal breast with transport beats,
Gives thanks to Heaven, and the great joy repeats."

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 8.

CHAPTER III

THE COURT OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES AT LEICESTER HOUSE AND RICHMOND LODGE

1718–1727

The Prince purchases Leicester House—He makes an abortive attempt to acquire Buckingham House—Duchess of Buckingham—The Duchess of Buckingham's eye to the main chance—Her letter to Mrs. Howard concerning the sale of Buckingham House—Richmond Lodge acquired by the Prince—The Leicester House circle—The Court at Richmond—The Prince's love of hunting—Mrs. Howard's devotion to that sport—The members of the Prince's Household—Lord Scarborough—Lord Deloraine—Lord Belhaven—Lord Herbert—Lord Stanhope—(Carr) Lord Hervey—Lord Sondes—Lord Paget—Lord Hertford—Lord William Manners—Colonel Campbell—Colonel Churchill—Colonel Selwyn—The Hon. Langham Booth—Charles Cathcart—John Montgomery—Henry Bellenden—Augustus Schütz—The Princess of Wales's Household—The Duchess of St. Albans—The Duchess of Bolton—Lady Berkeley—Lady Dorset—Lady Cowper—Duchess of Shrewsbury—The Hon. Mrs. Howard—The Hon. Mrs. Herbert—Mrs. Selwyn—Mrs. Walpole—Mrs. Pope—Mrs. Pollexfen—Mrs. Titchborne—William Clayton—Mrs. Clayton a favourite of the Princess of Wales—Her patronage of men of letters and clergymen—Her offer to Robert Walpole—The Princess and the clergy—Mrs. Clayton accepts bribes—Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *bon-mot*—Horace Walpole and Hervey's description of Mrs. Clayton—Mrs. Clayton and Mrs. Howard—Clayton created Baron Sundon—Lady Sundon retires from Court—Her death.

THE expulsion of himself and his suite from St. James's had made it incumbent upon the Prince of Wales to acquire a town residence, and he purchased for six thousand pounds from Portman Seymour, Leicester House, a large brick building, with a courtyard in front, and a Dutch garden at the back, which occupied the site of the present Empire Theatre of Varieties in Leicester Square, then known as Leicester Fields. During the reign of Charles I. and the Commonwealth it had

belonged to the Earls of Leicester ; in 1662 it had its first royal tenant in the person of George I.'s grandmother, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and since it had been rented first by a French, and then by a German, Ambassador. The Prince and Princess of Wales, after a brief stay at Lord Grantham's, took up their quarters there in January, 1718. Soon, however, they did not find it so commodious as they could have wished, and presently they cast covetous eyes upon Buckingham House, a larger pile, which stood upon the site of Arlington House, where Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, had lived, and which in 1703 had been purchased and rebuilt by John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham. The Duke died in March, 1721, and his heir Edmund, the second Duke, being a minor, overtures were made to the widow with a view to acquiring the property.

The Duchess of Buckingham, a daughter of James II. by Catherine Sedley, who was created Countess of Dorchester, was very proud of her lineage, always affected great state, and ostentatiously wore mourning on the anniversary of her father's death. When once she was prevented from driving through an enclosure sacred to royalty, " Tell the King," she exclaimed, " that, if it is reserved for royalty, he has no more right to go there than I have ; " this being reported to George I., he, always appreciative of a good joke, gave instructions that she should always be allowed to pass that way. This pride of blood did not, however, prevent her from endeavouring to drive a good financial bargain, as is shown by the letter she wrote on August 1, 1723, to Mrs. Howard :

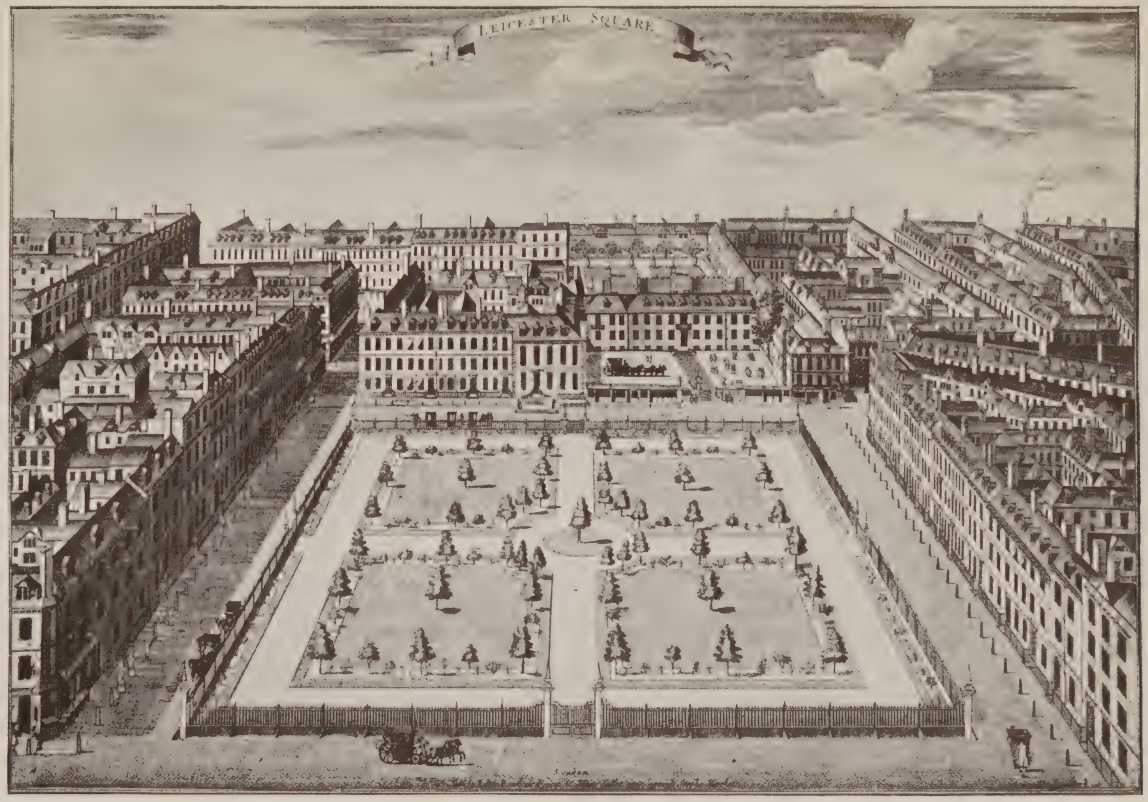
" I had not an opportunity of showing you the enclosed [letter from the Princess of Wales], nor my answer to it, which being wrote in haste, and not, perhaps, very good French, it is possible is not understood by her. I have ever treated you, Madam, as one who can distinguish people's humour and behaviour. I have expressed my intentions about the house in a way that several perhaps would not, but hint that, ' though I was unwilling to let the house, it was possible the trustees might,' in hopes, by difficulty, to raise a desire in their Royal Highnesses to have the house. Though the world teaches one daily those kind of arts, I really will not take the trouble of any method which I do not think proper for myself or rather for those I deal with. My intention of being out of London till

my son has more strength increased, and his affairs in the country, where his fortune lies, quite settled to my mind, makes me think of parting with my house on tolerable terms; and for worse it is not to be had, since I am pretty sure I will neither forfeit my fortune nor run it out. What I have named to Madame Germain without any advice, all my trustees being at present out of town; but we agree enough to be sure of their not opposing me, though it is less I know than they would approve; and indeed, considering the little care and regularity that is taken in the Prince's family, did his Highness give as much again as he might now have it for, it is possible one might repent it at the expiration of the lease.

"If their Royal Highnesses will have everything stand as it does, furniture and pictures, I will have £3,000 per annum; both run hazard of being spoiled, and the last, to be sure, will be all to be new bought whenever my son is of age. The quantity the rooms take cannot be well furnished under £10,000, but if their Highnesses will permit the pictures all to be removed, and buy the furniture as it will be valued by different people, the house shall go at £2,000. The Princess told me yesterday that she heard I would sell my house: now it is very strange she should hear so, because I have said I would not sell, and refused a good deal for it, which was proposed in an unknown name. Now, it will be found that my frank way of dealing proceeds more from my temper than from an over eagerness in parting with a place in which I pique myself to let my prudence get the better of vanity or inclination; and perhaps that wisdom will not always continue.

"If the Prince or Princess prefer much the buying outright, under £60,000 it will not be parted as it now stands, with furniture, pictures, gardens, meadows, and little tenements which pay £120 per annum; and all His Majesty's revenue cannot purchase a place so well situated, and so fit for them, nor for a less sum; or, indeed, it is hardly worth for that, giving my son, when he grows up, the mortification to find such a house gone from him; and half the purchase money, at least, will go to build him another to his mind—and a million cannot find him such a valuable one. As I shall be glad of an opportunity of talking more freely to you, and the Princess had spoke to you, Madam, concerning the matter, if you would give yourself so much trouble, could you not propose to see the house yourself and sound me about it; and, indeed, it is fit somebody should that can judge well and speak truth. I would willingly return from hence to meet you any day after next Monday.

"P.S.—I am not sure but I may go to the Bath, if I really



LEICESTER HOUSE.

From a contemporary print at the British Museum.

[*To face p.* 32.

imagined it likely that the princess (who, I believe, does not dislike having the house, though she is not quite so free as I am) should agree; and I would give orders to have it furnished sooner than otherwise I may; for although all the apartments above are, some of those below are not, put in order since the mourning was taken down. As to the house, as far as I can judge of her Royal Highness's thoughts by her manner, I believe she would like enough to be in it; but, because letting it happened to be the first named, and, as I confess, what I am most inclined to, Madame Germaine says that they are more inclined to buy it, but want money. You know I can say nothing in answer to that. The Princess asked me at the Drawing-room if I would sell my fine house, which—after I had, in my letter to her, desired nothing more might be said of it, in case the Prince did not treat for it,—might have surprised one, but it did not. I answered her, smiling, that I was under no necessity to part with it; yet, when what I thought was the value of it should be offered, perhaps my prudence might overcome my inclination."*

The terms were not acceptable to the Prince of Wales, and he remained at Leicester House until, after the death of his father, he returned to St. James's. Buckingham House, however, was purchased by the Crown in 1762 from Sir Charles Sheffield, and thirteen years later it was granted in lieu of Somerset House to Queen Charlotte, and during her lifetime was known as the Queen's House. It was practically rebuilt by John Nash for George IV., and thenceforth has been known as Buckingham Palace.

In the same year that he acquired Leicester House, the Prince rented Richmond Lodge. Richmond Lodge, which stood at no great distance from the present observatory, had been rebuilt by the Duke of Ormonde† in 1708, on the site of an ancient house which had long been known by the same name. On his impeachment in 1715, the Duke fled to France, and his brother, Lord Arran,‡ purchased the property, then leased for the term of ninety years. In 1720 the Prince bought it of him for the

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 55.

† James Butler, second Duke of Ormonde (1665–1745), an adherent of the Pretender.

‡ Charles Butler, third and last Duke of Ormonde (d. 1758).

sum of six thousand pounds.* At the Lodge, the Prince and Princess usually spent a couple of months every summer. It was her Royal Highness's favourite resort, and she set up a dairy there, and a menagerie, erected many ornamental buildings, including the once celebrated "Merlin's Cave." After the accession of George II., he settled the house and grounds on her—it was cruelly said, to rid himself of the cost of its upkeep.

If the Court of the King was dull, that of the Prince and Princess was in marked contrast, and attracted all the pleasure-loving folk of that day. At Leicester House there was a Drawing-room every morning, and a reception two or three times a week. "Balls, assemblies, and masquerades have taken the place of dull formal visiting days, and the women are more agreeable triflers than they were designed," Lord Chesterfield has written. "Puns are extremely in vogue, and the license very great. The variation of three or four letters in a word breaks no squares, inasmuch that an indifferent punster may make a very good figure in the best company." At Richmond, the chief pleasure was hunting, to which sport the Prince was greatly addicted, and in which he expected the members of his Court, male and female alike, to participate. The Maids of Honour rode to hounds, Mrs. Howard, too, until she was well over forty. "As your physician, I warn you against such violent exercise as you tell me you take. All extremes are, I believe, equally detrimental to the health of a human body, and especially to yours, whose strength, like Sampson's, lies chiefly in your head. If you continue your immoderate hunting, depend upon it, my dear Mrs. Howard, it will prove prejudicial to your constitution, as I find it has done to me entertainment, and will in time rob you of as much satisfaction as it has already deprived me of,"† Lady Hervey‡ wrote to Mrs. Howard, August 30, 1729; and in the following year, Mrs. Howard, writing from Hampton Court to John Gay, says: "We hunt with great violence, and have every day a very tolerable chance to have a neck broke."

* Crisp: *Richmond*, 416. Other authorities state that the Prince bought the Lodge from the Commissioners for Confiscated Estates.

† Add. MSS. 22628, f. 27.

‡ Lady Hervey, *née* Mary Lepell. (See p. 58.)

If the members of the King's Court were of great rank and dignity, those who formed the *entourage* of the Prince and Princess of Wales represented all that was gay and witty and lively.* His Royal Highness's most intimate friend, after the Duke of Argyll was removed from his Household,† was his Master of the Horse, Lord Lumley (afterwards Lord Scarborough). He was a general favourite, and as popular with the Princess as with his Royal master.

> *" God knows, I praise a courtier where I can.*
> *When I confess there is who feels for fame,*
> *And melts to goodness, need I Scarborow name ? "*

Pope wrote in his " Epilogue to the Satires " ; and Hervey pronounced a high encomium on him. " Lord Scarborough," he wrote, " was a man of worth, family, quality, sense, figure, character, and honour ; he had the Garter given him in the late reign ; was bred in a camp, and from thence brought to Court, and had all the gallantry of the one and the politeness of the other ; he was amiable and beloved, two things which, though they ought, do not always meet ; he was of the Cabinet Council, and was equally fit to be trusted in the most important affairs, or advised with in the most delicate ; having knowledge, application, and observation, and (without the *éclat* of showy parts) a discerning, practical, useful, and sound understanding." He was invested with the Garter in 1724, and attained to the rank of Lieutenant-General in 1739 ; retaining his office at Court until 1740, when he died by his own hand. He seems to have committed suicide in a fit of despondency occasioned by some scandalous imputation against him.

The Lords of the Prince's Bedchamber were Lord Deloraine,‡

* The Prince kept up a considerable state. In 1719 the salaries of the Household were £21,709, those of the Princess's, £10,184 ; total £31,893. These figures include pensions of £500 each to the Countess von Bückeburg, and to the Baroness von Gemmingen (d. 1723), who had been the children's governess. The Lords of the Bedchamber received £600 a year each, the Grooms £400 a year each, the Maids of Honour £200 a year.

† See p. 22.

‡ Henry Scott, Earl of Deloraine. (See p. 19 *note*.)

Lord Belhaven,* Lord Herbert,† Lord Stanhope, Lord Hervey,‡ Lord Sondes, Lord Paget,§ Lord Hertford,‖ and Lord William Manners ;¶ and the Grooms of the Bedchamber were Colonel Campbell,** Colonel Churchill,†† Colonel Selwyn,‡‡ the Hon. Langham Booth,§§ Charles Cathcart and John Montgomery, Henry Bellenden,‖‖ and, for a short time, the Hon. John

* John Hamilton, third Baron Belhaven, appointed Governor of Barbados in 1721, and drowned off the Lizard on the outward journey.

† Henry Herbert (1693–1751), known as Lord Herbert, until in 1733 he succeeded his father as (ninth) Earl of Pembroke. He was appointed Groom of the Stole to George II. in 1735. He attained to the rank of Lieutenant-General in 1742.

‡ Carr Hervey (1691–1723), known as Lord Hervey, eldest son of John, first Earl of Bristol. Though stated to have had "superior parts" to his brother John, he is best remembered as the reputed father of Horace Walpole, afterwards fourth Earl of Orford.

§ Thomas Catesby Paget (d. 1742), known as Lord Paget, son of Henry, first Earl of Uxbridge, whom he predeceased by one year ; the author of "An Essay on Human Life," etc. He held his post at Court from 1714 until his death.

‖ Algernon Seymour (1684–1750), known as Lord Hertford, until in 1748 he succeeded his father as (seventh) Duke of Somerset. He resigned his office in 1722.

¶ Lord William Manners, a younger son of John, first Duke of Rutland. In 1719 he entered Parliament as member for Leicestershire.

** Colonel John Campbell (d. 1770), son of the Hon. John Campbell, of Mamore, second son of Archibald, ninth Earl of Argyll. He succeeded as fourth Duke of Argyll in 1761, twenty-five years after the death of his wife, Mary Bellenden (see p. 69), whom he married in 1720.

†† Colonel (afterwards Lieutenant-General) Charles Churchil (d. 1745), a natural son of General Charles Churchill, brother of the first Duke of Marlborough. He was M.P. for Castle Rising from 1715 until his death ; Governor of Chelsea, 1720–1722, and of Plymouth, 1722–1745. The lover of Mrs. Oldfield, the actress, he had by her a son, the third Charles Churchill. His wife died in 1725.

‡‡ Colonel John Selwyn, of Matson, Gloucestershire (d. 1751) ; aide-de-camp to Marlborough ; M.P. for Gloucester, 1730–1747 ; Treasurer of Queen Caroline's Pensions. He married Mary Farrington (see p. 38), and was the father of George Augustus Selwyn, the wit.

§§ The Hon. Langham Booth (1684–1724), M.P. for Chester, a younger son of Henry, first Earl of Warrington.

‖‖ Henry (after Sir Henry) Bellenden (d. 1754), a younger son of John, second Baron Bellenden, and brother of Mary Bellenden.

Hervey.* The Master of the Prince's Robes was Augustus Schütz.†

In the Princess of Wales's Household the Duchess of St. Albans‡ was Groom of the Stole; and the Ladies of the Bedchamber were the Duchess of Bolton,§ the Duchess of Montagu,‖ Lady Berkeley,¶ Lady Dorset,** and Lady Cowper. Of these peeresses, one, the Duchess of Bolton, was as popular at St. James's as at Leicester House, and, having acquired the reputation of a droll, she continued successfully to keep up the character. One of her tricks was to say the most remarkable things, though apparently genuine slips of the tongue. One day after she had been to see Colley Cibber's comedy, "Love's Last Shift," she told the King how much she had enjoyed herself at the theatre. "But what was the play?" asked His Majesty, in French. "Cibber's '*La dernière chemise d'amour*,' Sire," she answered solemnly—to the joy of the King, who delighted in her wilful blunders. On another occasion, she came to the Drawing-room so obviously excited that George asked her what was the matter. "Mr. Whiston†† has just told me the world will be burnt up in three years," she answered.

* See p. 3.

† Augustus Schütz, elder son of Baron von Schütz (see p. 21), afterwards Keeper of the Privy Purse to George II.

‡ Lady Diana Vere (d. 1742), daughter of Aubrey de Vere, twentieth and last Earl of Oxford, married in 1694 Charles Beauclerk, first Duke of St. Albans.

§ See p. 19.

‖ Lady Mary Churchill, youngest daughter of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, married John, second Duke of Montagu. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu describes her as "a reigning beauty" (*Letters*, ed. Thomas, I. 358).

¶ Lady Louisa Lennox (1694–1717), daughter of Charles, first Duke of Richmond, married in 1714 James, third Earl of Berkeley.

** Elizabeth (d. 1768), daughter of General Walter Philip Colyear, had been a Maid of Honour to Queen Anne. In 1709 she married Lionel Cranfield Sackville, seventh Earl, and afterwards first Duke, of Dorset (see p. 12 *note*). On the accession of George II., she was appointed Groom of the Stole to the Queen, which post she resigned in 1731 to make way for Mrs. Howard, whose husband had just succeeded to the earldom of Sussex.

†† Rev. William Whiston (1667–1752), the translator of Josephus, was at the beginning of the reign of George I. lecturing on earthquakes and other natural phenomena as associated with the fulfilment of scriptural prophecies.

"For my part I am determined to go to China." An extra Lady of the Bedchamber was the Duchess of Shrewsbury.* "She had solicited the King for it, who had asked the Princess three times to do it, and since had told her it would be an obligation to him," Lady Cowper has written. "The Princess said to me afterwards that the Duchess of Shrewsbury was not her own choice, nor can anybody reasonably believe she could be, all the world knowing that her brother had forced the Duke to marry her after an intrigue together; which made a lady say that the Duke had been tricked out of the best marriage (meaning the Duchess of Somerset when Lady Ogle) and into the worst in Christendom. The Duchess of Shrewsbury had some extraordinary talents, and it was impossible to hate her as much as her Lord, though she was engaged in the same ill design. She had a wonderful art at entertaining and diverting people, though she would sometimes exceed the bounds of decency. She had a great memory, had read a great deal, and spoke three languages to perfection, but then, with all her prate and noise, she was the most cunning, designing woman alive, obliging to people in prosperity, and a great party-woman."†

The Women of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales were the Hon. Mrs. Howard, the Hon. Mrs. Herbert, Mrs. Clayton, Mrs. Selwyn,‡ Mrs. Walpole,§ suspected of a *liaison* with the Prince of Wales; Mrs. Pope, and Mrs. Titchborne, who replaced Mrs. Pollexfen, who died shortly after her appointment in 1714.

* Adelhida (d. 1726), daughter of the Marquis Palleotti, of Bologna, married in 1705 the Duke of Shrewsbury. (See p. 18 *note*.)

† *Diary*, October 26, 1714; p. 8.

‡ Mary (1691–1777), daughter of General Farrington, married Colonel John Selwyn (see p. 36). She is described by Horace Walpole as "mother of the famous George, and herself of much vivacity" (*Reminiscences*, CXXIX.).

§ Catherine (d. 1737), eldest daughter of John Shorter, of Bybrook, Kent, married in 1700 Robert Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, the statesman. She was "an extravagant woman of fashion." According to Lady Cowper, writing in 1720, "Walpole let the Prince intrigue with his wife, which both he and the Princess knew" (*Diary*, 134). She is said to have been the mistress of Carr Lord Hervey (see p. 3 *note*), the reputed father of Horace Walpole, of the "Letters."

Of the ladies of the Princess's suite, the one who, after Mrs. Howard, bulked most largely in the eyes of the Court folk was Mrs. Clayton. Charlotte Clayton was a daughter of John Dyve, a clerk in the Privy Council Office, and a grand-daughter of Sir Lewis Dyve, the Royalist. Sometime before the death of Queen Anne she married William Clayton, of Sundon Hall, who entered the House of Commons in 1698, and represented various constituencies until 1735, when a peerage was bestowed upon him. When the Duke of Marlborough left England in 1713 he appointed him a manager of his estates, and in the Duke's will he was named as an executor. He was Deputy-Auditor of the Exchequer in 1716, and a Lord of the Treasury from 1718 to 1720, and again from 1730 to 1737. He was, according to all accounts, a dull man. There is a story that one day at the Treasury, Bubb Dodington* made a witty remark, and Clayton laughed. "No, no," Dodington hastened to explain to his colleagues, "he is only now appreciating a joke I made last Treasury day."

The influence of the Duchess of Marlborough, exercised through Bothmar, secured for Mrs. Clayton the appointment in the Household of the Princess of Wales. She soon acquired an influence over her royal mistress, and it was said that the source of her power was the discovery that Her Royal Highness suffered from a rupture, a fact which Caroline had kept secret from everyone but her consort and her German nurse.† Horace Walpole was told this by his father, but Sir Robert was mistaken, for the misfortune did not happen until 1724, when Mrs. Clayton had been in the Princess's service for ten years. The favour she enjoyed was due to her art as a courtier. Very early in her career she refused a trifling request of the Baroness von Kielmansegg, in order to show that her sympathies were with the Prince and Princess as against the King. The Princess affected an interest in letters, her Woman of the Bedchamber showed

* George Bubb Dodington (1691–1762), assumed his mother's name of Dodington in 1720, on inheriting his uncle's estate of Eastbury, Dorsetshire. He entered Parliament in 1715, and was a Lord of the Treasury, 1724–1741; Treasurer of the Navy, 1744–1749, and again January–November, 1756. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Melcombe in 1761.

† Hervey: *Memoirs*, I. 90, III. 310; Thomson: *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 26.

attention to Steele and Voltaire, to Richard Savage and Stephen Duck.* "The Queen's chief study was divinity," Horace Walpole has written, and she had rather weakened her faith than enlightened it. She was at least not orthodox; and her confidante [Mrs. Clayton, afterwards] Lady Sundon, an absurd and pompous simpleton, swayed her countenance to the less believing clergy."† This brought Mrs. Clayton into conflict with Sir Robert Walpole, who controlled the clergy through Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London,‡ who often found his nominations opposed by her. Usually the victory rested with her, and she was once so elated that, he told his son Horace, she had proposed to unite with him in governing the kingdom: whereupon he bowed, and begged her patronage, but said he knew nobody fit to govern the Kingdom but the King and Queen.§ The clergymen whose claims she advocated included Dr. Robert Clayton,‖ a kinsman of her husband; Dr. Alured Clarke,¶ Dr. Samuel Clarke,** and Dr. Hoadly.††

It must be confessed that whatever hold religion exercised over Caroline in her youth, its influence had faded when she came to middle-age. In early days she had corresponded with Leibnitz, and her principal reading was in theology and philo-

* Stephen Duck (1705–1756), a minor poet of humble origin, was patronized by Caroline. In 1733 he married Sarah Big, the Queen's Housekeeper at Richmond, and two years later was made Keeper of the Queen's Library at that palace.

† *Reminiscences*, CXXX.

‡ Edmund Gibson (1669–1748), Bishop of Lincoln, 1716–1720; Bishop of London, 1720–1748; declined the Primacy, 1747.

§ Horace Walpole: *Letters* (ed. Cunningham), I. 115.

‖ Robert Clayton (1695–1758), Bishop of Killala, 1730-1745; Bishop of Clogher, 1745-1758.

¶ Alured Clarke (1696-1742), Rector of Chilbolton, Hampshire, 1723; Prebendary of Winchester, 1723, and Westminster, 1731; Dean of Exeter, 1741.

** Samuel Clarke (1675–1729), metaphysician, Rector of St. Benet's, Cheapside, 1706, and of St. James's, Westminster, 1709; a correspondent of Leibnitz. On the death of Newton in 1727, he declined the post of Master of the Mint.

†† Benjamin Hoadly (1676–1761), Chaplain to George I., 1715; Bishop of Bangor, 1715–1721; of Hereford, 1721–1723; of Salisbury, 1723–1724; and of Winchester, 1724–1761.

sophy; but her study of these subjects undoubtedly sapped her faith. She still indulged in discussions with the divines at Leicester House, but how little heed she paid to their ministrations is amusingly set out in a dramatic trifle by Lord Hervey, entitled "The Death of Lord Hervey, or, A Morning at Court." The scene is laid in the Queen's dressing-room; the Queen is discovered at her toilet, cleaning her teeth, with Mrs. Purcell dressing her Majesty's head, and the Princesses and the Ladies and Women of the Bedchamber standing round. Morning prayers are being said in the next room.

> *First Parson* (behind the scenes): "From pride, vain-glory and hypocrisy, from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness . . .
> *Second Parson:* "Good Lord, deliver us!"
> *The Queen:* "I pray, my good Lady Sundon, shut a little that door; these creatures pray so loud, one cannot hear oneself speak. (Lady Sundon goes to shut the door.) So, so, not quite so much; leave it open enough for those parsons to think we may hear, and enough shut that we may not hear quite so much."*

Mrs. Clayton's loyalty to her family was exemplary. One of her nieces, Dorothy, was appointed a Maid of Honour; and two others, Frances and Charlotte, were given minor posts in the Household. She secured for her brother Lewis a commission in the Horse Guards, and for another relative a place in the Annuity Office. These "jobs" she did, of course, for love; but all her recommendations were not inspired by altruistic motives. "The influence of Mrs. Clayton grew in this disturbed atmosphere," her biographer has written. "She left the pleasures of the Court to the young and beautiful. But her views were far, it is affirmed, from being disinterested, and personal aggrandisement was to be the price of her long hired services."† She certainly revelled in her sense of power, and liked people to pay court to her; but she also appreciated more material tributes, and was nothing loath to accept them. At her instance, Lord

* *Memoirs*, II. 163.

† Thomson: *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 100.

Pomfret,* on the accession of George II., was appointed Master of the Horse to the Queen, and for her good offices his wife sent her a pair of diamond earrings valued at £1,400. One day she wore these at a Drawing-room, whereupon the Duchess of Marlborough said aloud, "What an impudent creature to come here with her bribe in her ears." "Madame," said Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the terrible old lady, "how should people know where wine is sold unless a sign is hung out?" Mrs. Clayton retained her post at Court, albeit her influence waned somewhat after her mistress became Queen, until in 1735 her husband was created Baron Sundon in the peerage of Ireland.

Horace Walpole's description of her as "an absurd and pompous simpleton" is contradicted by the account which Hervey gave in his "Memoirs."† "Mrs. Clayton," he wrote, "had a head fitter for a Court than her temper, her passions being to the full as strong as her understanding; and as the one hindered her from being blind to people's faults, the other often hindered her from seeming so. She had sense enough to perceive what black and dirty company, by living in a Court, she was forced to keep; had honour enough to despise them, and goodness enough to hate them, and not hypocrisy enough at the same time to tell them they were white and clean. I knew her intimately, and think she had really a warm, honest, noble, generous, benevolent, friendly heart; and if she had the common weakness of letting those she wished ill to see it, she had in recompense the uncommon merit of letting those she wished well to not only see but feel it. She had so great a pleasure in doing real good, that she frequently employed the interest she had at Court in favour of people who could in no way repay her, and often for such as had not even solicited it." It must, however, be remembered that if Horace Walpole disparaged

* Thomas Fermor, first Earl of Pomfret (d. 1753). He married in 1720, Henrietta Louisa (d. 1761), daughter of John, second Baron Jeffreys. Lady Pomfret after her marriage was appointed a Lady of the Bedchamber, and retained the post until the death of the Queen. *The Correspondence between Frances, Countess of Hertford (afterwards Duchess of Somerset), and Henrietta Louisa, Countess of Pomfret, between the years* 1738–1741, was published in 1805.

† Vol. I., p. 90.

her on information he received from his father, Hervey, who praised her, was of the same faction at Court as she was. The truth probably lies somewhere between the statements of the two men. Hervey it is, too, who throws light on the relations between Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Clayton. "They hated one another very civilly and very heartily," he has recorded; "for whilst Mrs. Clayton was every moment like Mount Etna, ready to burst into flame, Mrs. Howard was as much mistress of her passions as of her limbs, and could as easily prevent the one from showing she had a mind to strike, as she could the other from giving the blow: her passions, if I may be allowed the comparison, were like well-managed horses, at once both hot and tractable. The enmity between these two ladies was a very natural consequence of their situations, the one having been always attracted to the master, and the other to the mistress; each was jealous of the other's interest, and each over-rated it; for as soon as their power (had they had any) came to have an opportunity of showing itself, the whole world perceived that the reputed favourite of the Princess had as little weight with the Queen as the reputed mistress of the Prince had with the King."* The women, however, cannot with any degree of accuracy be called rivals, because Mrs. Howard never was, anyhow from the time the Prince of Wales began to pay her attentions, in favour with his consort.

No scandal ever attached to Lady Sundon, yet she was little respected, as certainly she was little loved. While she was in power, people, of course, endeavoured to make use of her, and bowed the knee to her for their own ends. She had no friends. Of the hundreds of letters which she received and preserved,† only those from Lord Hervey have any personal note: the rest are from folk in all stations who were obviously seeking to enlist her interest on their behalf. After her

* *Memoirs*, I. 91.

† This correspondence is preserved in the British Museum (Add. MSS. 20102–20105, 30516). A selection was published in 1847 by Mrs. Thomson in a dull and ill-digested work, entitled, "Memoirs of Viscountess Sundon, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline." It may be remarked that Lady Sundon was not a Viscountess, nor did she ever occupy the post ascribed to her by her biographer.

retirement from Court, she, as her biographer states, " sank into a total insignificance."* Her death in 1742 aroused no more interest than that of her husband ten years later. Compare her later years with those of Mrs. Howard, who at Court gathered round her the brightest intellects of the day, and to the end was surrounded by loyal and loving friends.

* Thomson : *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, II. 382.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAIDS OF HONOUR OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES

Miss Meadows—Miss Shorter—Miss Roe—The Hon. Bridget Carteret—Anne Hammond—Jane Warburton—Jane Smith—Margaret Bradshaw—Her letters to Mrs. Howard—Miss Bradshaw at Gosworth Hall and Bath—Lady Mohun—Lady Bristol—Colonel Cotton—Duchess of Queensberry—John Gay—William Stanhope—"Beau" Nash—Sophia Howe—Her heedlessness—Her love of the Court—Dislike of a country life—Her letters to Mrs. Howard—Her elopement with the Hon. Anthony Lowther—The incident recalled in Hanbury Williams' verses—The tragic sequel—Hervey's "Epistle of Monimia to Philocles"—The rival beauties, Mary Lepell and the Hon. Mary Bellenden—Pope's account of the duties of a Maid of Honour—"Molly" Lepell—Tributes to her by Gay, Voltaire, Charles Churchill, Lady Louisa Stuart, and Chesterfield—The verses of Lord Chesterfield and William Pulteney—Her marriage with John (afterwards Lord) Hervey—A new way of securing a pension—Lord Hervey—Pope's description of him—Her interest in the Court—Her correspondence with Mrs. Howard—Her allegory of the Maids of Honour—The Hon. Mary Bellenden—Tributes to her charms by Gay, Hervey, and Horace Walpole—The Prince of Wales pays her unwelcomed attentions—Her indifference to etiquette—Her marriage with Colonel John Campbell—Her letters to Mrs. Howard—Her death—Colonel Campbell becomes fourth Duke of Argyll.

THE greatest attraction at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge was the bevy of pretty and lively Maids of Honour which the Princess of Wales gathered round her. These merry maidens were the centre of a group of the younger courtiers, and their apartments became the *rendezvous* of the most distinguished wits: they allured even Gay and Pope, who were never weary of praising them in their verse and in their correspondence. Sir Walter Scott speaks of the wit of Mary Lepell, the vivacity of the beautiful Mary Bellenden, the gaiety of Miss Howe and Miss Bradshaw; but found himself compelled to reflect upon their free and easy ways. "We used to feel indignant," he wrote, "at the frolics of the Maids of Honour at the Court of Brobdingnag, to which Gulliver has given circulation,

and at the report of other wags of the period, who alleged that the attendants of Princess Caroline were great adepts in the noble art of 'selling bargains.' But we must now apologize to the traveller and the wits for having suspected them of outstepping the limits of truth and probability, and admit that our grandmothers, however portentous the length of their stays, did not, after all, lace them so tightly as we have hitherto suspected."* As a matter of fact, however, there was no harm in the girls, though it must be confessed that an occasional coarseness prevents the entire transcription of their correspondence.

Of some of these Maids there is little to relate. Of Miss Meadows,† it is possible to say little more than that happy is the woman who has no history. She grew old in the service of the Court, where, in contrast to others, she inclined to prudery rather than to licence.

"*As chaste as Hervey or Miss Meadows,*"

Bubb Dodington wrote. Perhaps she felt herself somewhat out of place among her more free and easy companions, though they, to judge from the references to her in their correspondence, seem to have been devoted to her. Nevertheless, as is shown by the following letter from Lady Hervey to Mrs. Howard, July 7, 1729, she could indulge in pranks with the youngest of her colleagues :

"I am not at all surprised to hear that the Maids of Honour have suffered by the inclemency of the weather : people who are so *frolicsome* as to expose themselves to the night-air must expect to suffer by it ; but I think people who are of such very hot constitutions as to want to be refreshed by night walking, need not disturb others who are not altogether so warm as they are. It was very lucky that looking over letters till it was late, prevented some people being in bed, and in their first sleep, otherwise the infinite wit and merry pranks of the youthful maids might have been lost to the world. As for Miss M[eadows], it is a sad pity that all this time nobody has had the charity to find her better employment in the night than to fling people's windows open five or six times. Miss D[yve], I am apt to believe

* *Quarterly Review*, XXX. 522.

† In those days unmarried ladies were styled "Mrs.," but in this work the modern custom is followed.

will repent of her part of this pretty recreation; her aunt will inform her to some purpose of the ill-nature of endeavouring to frighten any one out of their senses, and of the indecency of being at such an hour in the garden, where it was supposed they hoped to find better entertainment than barely opening and rattling at windows. Miss V[ane]* and Miss F[itzwilliam]† had either the good fortune or the good-nature to be out of this witty invention, and it would have been full as well for the others if they had been so too, especially for poor old M[eadows], who should now take more care of herself, not being able as formerly to go through such expeditions. It is really very well that others had more good-nature than these fine ladies, and could prevail on themselves not to tell the queen of this; but they must not always expect so much moderation; people will not always bear such impertinences. I know not if you had any thing to do in this; but you have an extreme convenient door into the garden; so has Miss S[mit]h, who, if she had health enough, had certainly good-nature enough to be a party concerned."‡

Of Miss Shorter—who may have been a relative of Robert Walpole's wife—and of Miss Roe no particulars can be found. The Hon. Bridget Carteret was a niece of the first Lord Carteret; and all that is known of Anne Hammond is that she was a daughter of the poet and pamphleteer, Anthony Hammond, of Somersham Place, Huntingdonshire, and that she married, first, in 1719, William Dowdeswell, of Pall Court, Worcestershire, and by him was the mother of William Dowdeswell, the politician, and, secondly, in 1730, Dr. Noel Broxholme. It was at the request of the Duke of Argyll that Caroline included in her suite Jane, daughter of Thomas Warburton, of Winnington, Cheshire. He had fallen in love with her when she was a Maid of Honour at the Court of Queen Anne, and on the death of his first wife he married her. Jane Smith, the daughter of

* Anne Vane (d. 1736), daughter of Gilbert, second Baron Barnard, was Maid of Honour to Queen Caroline. She was a mistress of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and by him had a child in 1732, who was christened Cornwell Fitz-Frederick.

† Mary (d. 1769), elder daughter of Richard, fifth Viscount Fitzwilliam. She was a Maid of Honour to Queen Caroline; and married in 1733 Henry Herbert, ninth Earl of Pembroke (see p. 36). Lord Pembroke died in January, 1751, and in the following September she married Major North Ludlow Bernard.

‡ Add. MSS. 22628, f. 21.

"Speaker" Smith, remained in the service of the Princess until she was appointed Governess to the Duke of Cumberland.*

Nor can any account be given of Margaret ("Peggy") Bradshaw, save that she was a frequent visitor to Lady Mohun† at Gosworth Hall, and, when away from Court, a regular correspondent of Mrs. Howard, with whom she was on very intimate terms. She had a kind heart, wit and sprightliness, but her gaiety was greater than her reticence, and a want of delicacy characterized her letters, some extracts from which, however, are well worthy of perusal.

"August 21, 1720.

"Yes, Madam Howard, I have been in Pluto's gloomy regions, where I was very well received both by his majesty and queen Proserpine. They were seated upon a throne of ebony; at the foot of the throne was Death, with his sharp-edged scythe, instead of a chamberlain's wand; about him flew black Cares and cruel Jealousies, and Ambition, putting all in confusion. On the one side of the presence chamber was Tartarus, which is the abode of kings that govern by arbitrary power; and on the other the Elysian fields, where such good people as you and I are rewarded; but I was forced to go through Tartarus before I could come at the Elysian fields.

"I met a world of my acquaintance, but did not much care to acknowledge them. In a passage betwixt these two places I met with our old friend Lord Wharton;‡ he is just the same gay thing he was in our world; he told me that at the side of the room I was then in, there was prepared a place for the present ministry; for, said he, they are of a mongrel kind, neither quite fit for hell or heaven, and nobody here would care to associate with them. I asked him after the *beaux esprits*. Alas! said he, we have no such thing; Minerva has as great a pique to our region as to yours. I pay my tithe as ill here as I did the last twenty years of my abode in the other world: but we have some fine gay things here of both sexes, and about a month ago one of Proserpine's maids [Mary Bellenden] was privately married to one of

* William Augustus (1721–1765), sixth child of George II., created Duke of Cumberland, 1726.

† Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. Thomas Laurence, the second wife of Charles, fourth Baron Mohun, who fell in a duel with James Douglas, fourth Duke of Hamilton in 1712, the story of which combat is introduced by Thackeray in "Esmond." She married, second, in 1717, Charles Mordaunt, a nephew of Charles, third Earl of Peterborough.

‡ Thomas Wharton, Marquis of Wharton (1648–1715), the Whig statesman.

Pluto's Bedchamber [Colonel Campbell]; she is gone to make a visit to one of the Court: there he stands, as pensive as if he had just thrown an ill cast.

"We have, said he, one lady [Mrs. Howard herself], whom I can recommend to your frendship; her father was a son of the muses, and his daughter inherits her sire's wit; she is a great favourite of Pluto, and consequently of our Queen: all the Court are fond of her, she being always ready to do a good turn, and seldom speaks ill of any one; this character made me think the time long till he brought us together. I found her person prodigiously agreeable, and for the time I staid below I was as often with her as I could. I found she answered the account my marquis had given me beyond my expectation, and did what I could to improve a friendship she at first gave me cause to hope for; but, whether I was not to her taste, or what other reason she had, I do not think I gained upon her so much as I wished; and finding nothing else to please me I resolved Charon should ferry me back again. We were but very few passengers: nothing remarkable happened in my voyage, and I arrived in this world at ten last night, which I found just as disagreeable as I left it.

"This epistle will convince you change of air has not made me worse humoured; that I am ready to tell you all I know; but you are as close as a stopped bottle, and do not give one the least account how things go on your side of the water."*

"Bath,
"August 30, 1721.

"Oh, Madam Howard, your poor slave Peggy has had one leg in the grave since you saw her; which has so accustomed me to think that all worldly things are vanity and vexation of spirit that I am fitter to give you a sermon than an account how things pass here.

"Either I have no taste, or all the disagreeable people from the four corners of the world are assembled together in this place; though my good lady Countess [? of Bristol],† who is never out of her way, can find amusement amongst them till twelve o'clock at night. There are a good many ladies one knows, but the men (which you know is what interests me) are such unfinished animals, one would swear they were beholden to the hot springs for their creation, without any other assistance. Here is a

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 114.

† Elizabeth (1677–1741), daughter of Sir Thomas Felton, Bart., became in 1695 the second wife of John Hervey, first Earl of Bristol. The eldest son of this marriage was John, Baron Hervey of Ickworth (see p. 3). She was a Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales.

Colonel Cotton,* who is a good agreeable man; but the ladies are all so fond of him, that I believe he must take to his bed soon. If you see a footman in the streets his errand is to Colonel Cotton: he gives breakfasts, makes balls, plays, and does everything a lady can desire; but then he is but one man, and cannot turn himself to at least ten women that have fastened upon him, from which contests do often arise amongst us.

"I would fain persuade Mr. Gay to draw his pen; but he is a lost thing, and the colic has reduced him to pass a humdrum hour with me very often. I desired him to club a little wit towards diverting you, but he said it was not in him; so I chose rather to expose myself, than not put you in mind of a poor sick body that has taken physic to-day and not seen the face of a mortal.

"The Countess is upon the walk, and has just sent me word she is coming home, and brings a party at ombre for me, which I had rather she had let alone; but it shows her good will, and she is really prodigious kind and civil to me. My dear Howard, adieu: as I mend in health, it is to be hoped the product of my pen will be something better; if not, I have so much regard for you, that I will draw it no more."†

Miss Bradshaw wrote again from Bath, on the following September 19, to Mrs. Howard, and the letter is interesting as giving a bird's-eye view of the company at that famous watering-place.

"I really do not know how to go about giving you a description of the pleasures of this place. To me it is all noise and nonsense, but the Countess [of Bristol] finds her recreations: she cries every post-day for an hour, because the earl has not come; she dries up her tears about twelve, to play upon the walks, and an hour sooner, if any body gives a breakfast (which happens about three times a week); we quarrel and are friends, and at it again after it is scolded out. I am only a humble spectator; for as yet, I thank God, I have not been in any of them. If it were not for some few people here that knew my parentage, I should be just upon the footing you and I have often agreed the saddest circumstance of life. In short, dear Howard, I never was so tired of any place in my life—but that is to go no farther.

"Mr. and Mrs. [Robert Sawyer] Herbert are here, and I never saw anybody so much recovered as she is. Mrs. Beringer passes most of her time with Mr. Congreve,‡ who is in the house

* Probably the Colonel Cotton referred to by Lady Wortley Montagu as a lover of Lady Bristol.

† Add. MSS. 22627, f. 122.

‡ William Congreve (1670–1729), the dramatist.

with her. Mr. Stanhope* is at present the reigning man, and the Countess [of Bristol]'s favourite. To-night he gives her and her company a supper at Dame Lindsey's [Assembly Rooms], and on Monday a ball:—who shall be invited to it has been matter of dispute these two days, and I fancy will end in pulling of coifs.

"I met Mr. Gay by chance, and told him your message: he is always with the Duchess of Queensberry,† for we are too many for him; but that is only in your ear, for we have now and then a private conference at the Pump. Mrs. Coke goes away on Sunday, and I shall have a great loss; for when I can be my own woman I go to her, and am quiet for an hour. I believe I should be a great deal better for the waters, if I was not hunted beyond my strength; but as it is, I have no spirits. I hope to bottle them up till we meet, and then I am sure I shall divert you with a historical account of my travels.

"Yesterday I began to pump, which, they say, will do my ears good. I came deaf, and I believe I shall go home dumb; for I make very little use of my talking faculty, for fear of a quarrel.‡ Nash§ says, if I go off without one, my statue shall be set up in the town.

"I am heartily sorry you have had the headache; but then I am glad you do not like the people about you, if it makes you hope after your absent friends; into which number I will crowd with might and main, and will not easily be thrust out. I told the Countess your message, and she gave me a long answer, which I will not set down: the substance thereof was, that you promised to write first. She is come home, and I am called down to dinner, and shall be in constant waiting till bed-time—so, my dear Madam Howard, adieu.

"Your letter has put me in better humour than I use to be, so I hope you will do it again."‖

As bright, as gay, as fearless as any of the other Maids of

* Probably the Hon. William Stanhope, son of Philip, third Earl of Chesterfield, and brother of the author of the "Letters," created K.C.B., 1725.

† Lady Catherine Hyde (d. 1777), second daughter of Henry, Earl of Clarendon, married in 1720, Charles Douglas, third Duke of Queensberry.

‡ A quarrel, that is, with Lady Bristol, whose temper was notoriously capricious. Her daughter-in-law ("Molly" Lepell) wrote to Mrs. Howard in 1732: "Perhaps you imagine you can receive no news out of the country, but I shall convince you to the contrary, by informing you that Lady Bristol has lived with me a whole fortnight, with all civility and kindness."

§ Richard (commonly called "Beau") Nash (1674–1762), the famous Master of the Ceremonies at Bath.

‖ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 124.

Honour was Sophia Howe, and as heedless, too, if Gay may be believed, who wrote :

> " . . . *Perhaps Miss Howe came there by chance,*
> *Nor knows with whom, nor why she comes along.*"*

She was the daughter of General Emanuel Scrope Howe, and the niece of Scrope, first Viscount Howe. Her mother was Ruperta, a natural daughter of Prince Rupert and Margaret Hughes, one of the earliest English actresses, who in 1663 at Drury Lane gave the first recorded performance of Desdemona by a girl. Sophia inherited the high spirits of her maternal grandparents—whose *liaison* is duly recorded in the pages of Grammont—and also their recklessness. Pope thought fit to give her a word of warning in his lines in " Answer to the Following Question of Miss Howe :

> " *What is prudery ?—*
> *'Tis a beldam*
> *Seen with wit and beauty seldom.*
> *'Tis a fear that starts at shadows,*
> *'Tis (no, 't isn't) like Miss Meadows.*
> *'Tis a virgin hard of feature,*
> *Old, and void of all good-nature ;*
> *Lean and fretful ; would seem wise ;*
> *Yet plays the fool before she dies.*
> *'Tis an ugly, envious shrew,*
> *That rails at dear Lepell and you.*"

Sophie Howe loved the Court, and hated being away from it, and was always bored when she had to visit her mother at the quiet Ranger's Lodge, in Holt Forest, near Farnham. Two of her letters, written from there in the autumn of 1718 or 1719, and addressed to Mrs. Howard at Leicester House, have been preserved, and are eminently characteristic.

" You will think, I suppose, that I have had no flirtation since I am here ; but you will be mistaken ; for the moment I entered Farnham, a man, in his own hair, cropped, and a

* *Pope's Welcome from Greece.*

brown coat, stopped the coach to bid me welcome, in a very gallant way; and we had a visit, yesterday, from a country clown of this place, who did all he could to persuade me to be tired of the noise and fatigue of a court-life, and intimated, that a quiet country one would be very agreeable after it, and he would answer that in seven years I should have a little court of my own.

"I think this is very well advanced for the short time I have been here; and, truly, since what this gentleman has said, I am half resolved not to return to you, but follow his advice in taking up with a harmless, innocent, and honest livelihood, in a warm cottage; but for fear I should be tempted too far, put my Lord Lumley* in mind to send the coach for me on Tuesday se'nnight; for though it will be a sort of mortification for me to leave this place, I will not be so ill-natured as to let you all die for want of me.

"I am just come from Farnham church, where I burst out in laughing the moment I went in, and it was taken to be because I was just pulling out one of my Scotch cloth handkerchiefs, which made me think of Jenny Smith. The pastor made a very fine sermon upon what the wickedness of this world was come to. . . .

"My service to the Duke of Argyll, and tell him I brought down his play-things to divert myself here, I cannot say to put myself in mind of him; for *that* purpose it would have been a needless trouble to load the coach with them. Tell [Lord] Stanhope I have lost the *Bath ring* he gave me, but I am going into one (a bath) to-night, where I will dive for the other (a ring) to give him when we meet."†

"I am very impertinent to trouble you so often, but I must desire you to get the princess to excuse me from coming to the birth-day, for my grandmother [Margaret Hughes] is dead; but I must come to town before, though Mamma has invited me to stay here till afterwards, which put me in such a tremble that I am hardly recovered: it was indeed a dismal hearing.

"Pray desire my Lord Lumley to send the coach to Godalming next Wednesday, that I may go off on Thursday, which will be a happy day, for I am very weary of The Holt, though I bragged to [Bridget] Carteret that I was very well pleased; she has often remarked, I am the worst dissembler in the world; for I always out with the truth at last: but then I proposed some pleasure in going to Hackwood [Park], and to my Lady Forster's, where I shall only dine the day I depart.

* Lord Lumley (see p. 35), it will be remembered, was Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales.

† Add. MSS. 22629, f. 4.

"If my Lord Lumley does not send the coach he never shall have the least flirtation more with me. Perhaps he may be glad of me for a *summer suit* next year at Richmond, when he has no other business upon his hands. Next Wednesday the coach must come, or I die. Pray send me word before-hand if he will obey my commands, for that will keep up my spirits while I stay.

"The good lady [Mrs. Howe] put on her broad-girdled calico gown, and striped night-clothes, to look decent upon the death of her mother: that frill is a bad omen for me, for she always comes out with something dreadful when she is adorned. She no sooner entered the room, with a face a thousand times more pale than ever *you* had, but she comes out with the fatal sentence, 'that I might take this opportunity of staying here some time longer;'—but hang me if I do!—and if the coach is not sent, I will come away in the waggon, that I am resolved upon. No! no! I have profited better by her lesson than to fail so much in my duty to the Princess in being so long without waiting.

"One good thing I have got by the long time I have been here, which is, the being more sensible than ever I was of my happiness in being Maid of Honour; I won't say, 'God preserve me so,' neither; that would not be so well. I believe it will be better for me to go straight to town, that I may have my matters in order against you come. I have told Mamma that Lumley *must* send the coach a good while before the birth-day, because the men must all be in town to have new liveries made; so let somebody write me a letter that 'he is very sorry it must be so, but that it is absolutely necessary' (I am sure to my repose) 'to come next Thursday.' My service to all the he and she flirts at Richmond."*

On the occasion of Sophie Howe laughing in church, alluded to in the first of the letters printed above, the Duchess of St. Albans reproved her, saying she could not do a worse thing; to which the giddy girl replied, "I beg your Grace's pardon, I can do a great many worse things." One thing more disastrous she certainly did, for in the following year, having fallen in love with Anthony Lowther,† she ran away with him. The elopement created a great sensation at the time, and the memory of it was revived a score of years later by Hanbury

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 8.

† Anthony, son of Colonel Lowther, of Hackthorp, and younger brother of Sir John Lowther, afterwards first Viscount Lonsdale. He was a Commissioner of the Irish Revenue.

Williams* in those delightful verses, "Isabella, or, The Morning." The *beaux* are paying their respects to the beautiful Duchess of Manchester,† and the incident is referred to by General Churchill,‡ whose interminable stories of the wars of the reign of Queen Anne made him dreaded in polite circles throughout the kingdom.

> *"The General found a lucky minute now*
> *To speak. 'Ah, ma'am, you do not know Miss Howe!*
> *I'll tell you all her history,' he cried.*
> *At this Charles Stanhope§ gaped extremely wide;*
> *Dick Bateman‖ hung his head; her Grace turn'd pale,*
> *And Lovell¶ trembled at th' impending tale.*
> *'Poor girl! faith, she was once extremely fair,*
> *Till worn by love, and tortured by despair,*
> *Her pining face betrayed her inward smart;*
> *Her breaking looks foretold her breaking heart.*
> *At Leicester House her passion first began,*
> *And Nunty Lowther was a pretty man:*
> *But when the Princess did to Kew remove,*
> *She could not bear the absence of her love:*
> *Away she flew'—(interrupted by a footman's knock)."*

The incident ended tragically. "Sophie Howe," Henrietta Jannsen wrote to Lady Denbigh, "has been the talk of the town of late, for she is gone out of her senses, and has exposed herself to the last degree, for about three days ago she ran away from Richmond, dressed in men's shoes and breeches, her head dressed and a cloak of a riding hood on. So she came up by water, landed at Whitehall, walked through the Park, and by the time she got half way she had a hundred mob who followed her to St. James's Coffee-house, where some gentlemen that knew

* Sir Charles Hanbury Williams (1708–1759), diplomatist, and author of many satirical verses.

† Isabella, daughter of John, Duke of Montagu, married William Montagu, second Duke of Manchester (d. 1739). She afterwards married Edward Hussey, who assumed the name of Montagu, and was created Earl of Beaulieu.

‡ See p. 36.

§ Charles Stanhope (1673–1760), Secretary to the Treasury, 1720–1721; acquitted of fraudulent dealings in connection with the South Sea Company; Treasurer of the Chamber, 1721.

‖ William Bateman, first Viscount Bateman (d. 1744).

¶ Thomas Coke, Baron Lovell, afterwards Earl of Leicester.

her came out and begged her for God's sake not to expose herself so, but all in vain, for she made a speech, told the mob who she was and that she was a-going to her Nunty, by whom she meant Mr. Lowther who she is in love with, and, by the way, the town says she is with child by, but he now is cruel. So on she walks till now she come to Lord Lowther's. She knocked at the door and enquired for him. The porter said he was at home and he would let him know it, but when he heard it, he got out the back way and would not see, at which she was so enraged that she stormed, swore, and cursed, and tore herself to pieces to that degree that they were forced to send to her mother and friends, and they have confined her. It is certain he has been unkind, but, however, I thought her a little bit out the way ever since I knew her."* Lowther refused to marry the girl, who died, it is said, of a broken heart, in 1726. She is the heroine of Lord Hervey's " Epistle of Monimia to Philocles."

" Lost to the world, abandon'd and forlorn,
Expos'd to infamy, reproach and scorn,
To mirth and comfort lost, and all for you,
Yet lost, perhaps, to your remembrance too,
How hard my lot! what refuge can I try,
Weary of life, and yet afraid to die!
Of hope, the wretch's last resort, bereft,
By friends, by kindred, by my lover, left.
Oh! frail dependence of confiding fools!
On lovers' oaths, or friendship's sacred rules,
How weak in modern hearts, too late I find,
Monimia fall'n, and Philocles unkind! "

While most of the Maids of Honour were beautiful and charming, the palm was given by general consensus to Mary Lepell and Mary Bellenden, who were usually bracketed together by the poets.

" So well I'm known at Court
None asks where Cupid dwells;
But readily resorts
To B[ellende]n's or L[epe]ll's,"

* *Denbigh MSS.*—Hist. MSS. Com. Report 8, Part I. 571.

Gray wrote in his ballad, " Damon and Cupid " ; and in the same strain an anonymous versifier, supposed to be giving a country cousin the news of the metropolis, sings :

" To you it is my ballad comes,
To tell you pranks of drawing-rooms ;
What pranks are played behind the scenes,
And who at Court the belle—
Some swear it is the Bellenden,
And others say Lepell."

Pope was devoted to both of them, and mentions them in a letter to the Misses Blount,* written on September 13, 1717, which is particularly interesting as throwing light upon the duties of the Maids of Honour : " She went by water to Hampton Court, unattended by all but my own virtues, which were not of so modest a nature as to keep themselves, or me, concealed : for I met the Prince, with all his ladies on horseback coming from hunting. Mrs. B[ellenden] and Mrs. L[epell] took me into protection (contrary to the laws against harbouring Papists), and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversing with Mrs. H[oward]. We all agreed that the life of a Maid of Honour was of all things the most miserable : and wished that every woman who envied it, had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in a morning, ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with the fever and (what is a hundred times worse) with the red mark on the forehead from an uneasy hat ! All this may qualify them to make excellent wives for foxhunters, and bear abundance of ruddy-complexioned children. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simper an hour in the Princess's apartment : from thence (as Shakespear has it) to *dinner, with what appetite they may*—and after that, till midnight, walk, work, or think, which they please. I can easily believe, no lone house in Wales, with a mountain and a rookery, is more contemplative than this Court ; and as a proof of it, I need only tell you Mrs. L[epell] walked with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality

* Martha (1690–1762) and Theresa, daughters of Listor Blount, the friends and correspondents of Pope.

but the King, who gave audience to the Vice-Chamberlain [Thomas Coke], all alone, under the garden wall. In short, I heard of no ball, assembly, basset-table, or any place, where two or three were gathered together, except Madam Kielmansegg's, to which I had the honour to be invited, and the grace to stay away."*

Everyone had a good word and a smile for laughter-loving "Molly" Lepell,† whose grace and playful wit enchanted all who met her. "Hervey, fair of face,"‡ Gay described her; and Voltaire paid tribute to her in the only English verses from his pen which have been preserved:

"Hervey, would you know the passion
You have kindled in my breast?
Trifling is the inclination
That by words can be expressed.

"In my silence see the lover;
True love is by silence known;
In my eyes you'll best discover
All the power of your own."

Even Charles Churchill, that most rancorous of satirists, had a kindly word for her:

"That face, that form, that dignity, that ease,
Those powers of pleasing, with what will to please,
By which Lepell, when in her youthful days,
Even from the currish Pope extorted praise."

Indeed, she kept her charm, and, though suffering from gout and rheumatism, preserved her good looks until the end. "By the attractions she retained in age," Lady Louisa Stuart has written, "she must have been singularly captivating when young, gay, and handsome; and never was there so perfect a model of the finely polished, highly bred, genuine woman of

* *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 273.

† Mary (1700-1768) was the daughter of Nicholas Lepell, a Page of Honour to Prince George of Denmark. He came to England and was naturalized in 1699. In 1705 he was given a commission to raise a regiment of foot, and five years later was promoted Brigadier-General.

‡ *Pope's Welcome from Greece.*

"Molly" Lepell, afterwards Lady Hervey of Ickworth.

[*To face p.* 58.

fashion. Her manners had a foreign tinge which some called affected, but they were gentle, easy, dignified, and altogether exquisitely pleasing." It was she whom Lord Chesterfield commended to his son as a model of all that was charming. "She has been bred all her life at Courts, of which she has acquired all the easy good breeding and politeness, without the frivolousness," he wrote on November 1, 1750. "She has all the reading that a woman should have, and more than any woman need have; for she understands Latin perfectly well, though she wisely conceals it. . . . No woman ever had more than she has *le ton de la parfaitement bonne compagne, les manières engageantes, et le je ne sais quoi qui plait.*"* A tribute had already been paid to her by Lord Chesterfield, who, in collaboration with William Pulteney,† had in 1726 written a set of verses which were sent to her anonymously. "She is in a little sort of a miff about a ballad that was writ on her, to the tune of 'Molly Mog,'‡ and sent to her in the name of a begging poet," Arbuthnot wrote to Swift, November 8, 1726. "She was *bit*, and wrote a letter to the begging poet, and desired him to change the *doubles entendres;* which the authors, Mr. Pulteney and Lord Chesterfield, changed into *singles entendres.* I was against that, though I had a hand in the first. She is not displeased, I believe, with the ballad, but only with being *bit.*"§ She was, however, much too good-natured to continue angry for any length of time, and in the end she joined in the laugh.

The Muses quite jaded with rhyming,
To Molly Mog bid a farewell;
But renew their sweet melody chiming,
To the name of dear Molly Lepell.

* *Works* (ed. Mahon), II. 42.

† William Pulteney (1684–1760), statesman; created Earl of Bath, 1742.

‡ "Molly Mog, or, The Fair Maid of the Inn," was a ballad by Gay, which was published in *Mist's Journal*, August 27, 1726. The first verse runs:

"Says my uncle, I pray you discover
What hath been the cause of my woes,
Why you pine and you whine like a lover?—
I have seen Molly Mog of the 'Rose.'"

§ Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVII. 71.

Bright Venus yet never saw bedded
So perfect a beau *and a* belle,
As when Hervey the handsome was wedded
To the beautiful Molly Lepell.

So powerful her charms, and so moving,
They would warm an old monk in his cell,
Should the Pope himself ever go roaming,
He would follow dear Molly Lepell.

If to the seraglio you brought her,
Where for slaves their maidens they sell,
I'm sure tho' the Grand Seignior bought her,
He'd soon turn a slave to Lepell.

Had I Hanover, Bremen, and Verden,
And likewise the Duchess of Zell!
I'd part with them all for a farthing,
To have my dear Molly Lepell.

Or were I the King of Great Britain,
To choose a minister well,
And support the throne that I sit on,
I'd have under me Molly Lepell.

Of all the bright beauties so killing,
In London's fair city that dwell,
None can give me such joy were she willing,
As the beautiful Molly Lepell.

What man would not give the great Ticket,
To his share of the benefit fell,
To be but one hour in a thicket,
With the beautiful Molly Lepell.

Should Venus now rise from the ocean
And naked appear in her shell,
She would not cause half the emotion,
That we feel from dear Molly Lepell.

Old Orpheus, that husband so civil,
He followed his wife down to Hell,
And who would not go to the devil,
For the sake of dear Molly Lepell?

Her lips and her breath are much sweeter,
Than the thing which the Latins call mel *;*
Who would not this plump for a metre,
To chime to dear Molly Lepell?

In a bed you have seen pinks and roses ;
Would you know a more delicate smell?
Ask the fortunate man who reposes
On the bosom of Molly Lepell.

'Tis a maxim most fit for a lover,
If he kisses he never should tell :
But no tongue can ever discover
His pleasure with Molly Lepell.

Heaven keep our good King from a rising,
But that rising who's fitter to quell
Than some lady with beauty surprising,
And who should that be but Lepell?

If Curll would print me this sonnet*
To a volume my verses should swell ;
A fig for what Dennis† says on it,
He can never find fault with Lepell.

Then Handel to music shall set it,
Thro' England my ballad shall sell ;
And all the world readily get it,
To sing to the praise of Lepell.

Mary Lepell was appointed a Maid of Honour to the Princess of Wales upon the accession of George I., but she did not long

* Edmund Curll (1675–1747), the piratical bookseller.

† John Dennis (1657–1734), critic, made famous by Pope's attacks on him.

grace the Court, for in 1720 she married the Hon. John Hervey, who, after the death in 1723 of his elder brother Carr, was known under the style of Lord Hervey for ten years, when he was summoned to the House of Lords in his father's barony. After her marriage she was seldom seen at Leicester House or St. James's, though at first she occasionally did visit the Court, to her considerable advantage. "What I am going to say I am as sure is true as if I had been a transactor in it myself," the Duchess of Marlborough wrote to Lord Stair,* December 3, 1737. "I will begin the relation with Mr. Lepell, my Lord Fanny's† wife's father, having made her a cornet in his regiment as soon as she was born, which is no more wrong to the design of an army than if she had been a son: and she was paid many years after she was a Maid of Honour. She was extremely forward and pert; and my Lord Sunderland got her a pension of the late King [George I.], it being too ridiculous to continue her any longer an officer in the Army. And into the bargain, she was to be a spy; but what she could tell to deserve a pension, I cannot comprehend. However, King George the First used to talk to her very much; and this encouraged my Lord Fanny and her to undertake a very extraordinary prospect: and she went to the Drawing-room every night, and publicly attracted his Majesty in a most vehement manner, insomuch that it was the diversion of the town; which alarmed the Duchess of Kendal, and the Ministry that governed her, to that degree, lest the King should be put in the opposer's hands, that they determined to buy my Lady Hervey off; and they gave her four thousand pounds to desist, which she did, and my Lord Fanny bought a good house with it, and furnished it very well."‡ Lord Hervey was one of the best-hated men of his day. His effeminacy made him disliked of men, and not even his brilliant parts could make anyone overlook the fact that he painted his face. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu divided the human race into three species, men, women, and Herveys; and Pope, never too gentle even

* James Dalrymple, second Earl of Stair (1673–1747), Ambassador at Paris, 1715–1720.

† "Lord Fanny" was one of Lord Hervey's many nicknames. Others, used by Pope, were "Sporus," "Paris," "Adonis," and "Narcissus."

‡ Horace Walpole: *Reminiscences*, C/VIII.

JOHN, LORD HERVEY OF ICKWORTH.
From the portrait by Van Loo at the National Portrait Gallery.

[*To face p.* 62.

in the description of his friends, gave full rein to his malignity when drawing Hervey's portrait, and left him scarred for all times :

" P. Let Sporus tremble—
" A. What ? that thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curd of ass's milk ?
Satire or sense, alas ! can Sporus feel,
Who breaks a butterfly on the wheel ?

" P. Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings ;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet wit ne'er tastes and beauty ne'er enjoys :
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.
Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks ;
Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,*
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
In pun, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies.
His wit all see-saw, between that and this.
Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,
And he himself one vile antithesis.
Amphibious thing ! that acting either part,
The trifling head, or the corrupted heart ;
Fop at the hostel, flatterer at the board,
Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.
Eve's tempter thus the Rabbins have expressed,
A cherub's face—a reptile all the rest.
Beauty that shocks you, parts that none can trust,
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust."†

Nevertheless Lord Hervey's marriage was for love, and for a while they were very happy. Indeed, until the end, in spite of his infidelities, they remained on good terms. Lady Hervey

* Queen Caroline.

† *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, 1734.

proved herself an excellent mother to her numerous children, and interested herself in their education and upbringing. She always thought with affection of the years she spent at Court, and she was always eager for news of her friends and their doings at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge, and, later, at St. James's and Hampton Court. With Mrs. Howard she kept up an intermittent correspondence, and some of the letters that passed between them make good reading.

LADY HERVEY TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD.

"Ickworth,

"August 31, 1728.

"The place [Hampton Court] your letter was dated from recalled a thousand agreeable things to my remembrance, which I flatter myself you do not quite forget. I wish I could persuade myself that you regret them, or that you could think the tea-table more welcome in a morning if attended (as formerly) by the *Schatz* [Lady Hervey]. If that were possible, it would be the means (and the only one at this time) to make me wish to exchange Ickworth for any other dwelling in England. I really believe a *frizelation* would be a surer means of restoring my spirits than the exercise and hartshorn I now make use of. I do not suppose that name still subsists; but pray let me know if the thing itself does, and if they meet in the same cheerful manner to sup as formerly. Are ballads or epigrams the consequences of those meetings? Is good sense in the morning, and wit in the evening, the subject or rather the foundation of the conversation? That is an unnecessary question; I can answer it myself, since I know you are of the party; but, in short, do you not want *poor Tom* [Lady Hervey] and *Bella-dine* [Mary Bellenden] as much as I want *Swiss* (in the first place) and them?

"I pass my mornings at present as much like those at Hampton Court as I can, for I divide them between walking and the people of the best sense of their time; but the difference is, my present companions [books] are dead, and the others were quite alive. If you would have the good nature to add (by your letters) the charms of Hampton Court to the pleasures of Ickworth, they will be received and acknowledged with gratitude."

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO LADY HERVEY.

"September, 1728.

"Hampton [Court] was very different from the place you knew; and to say we wished Tom Lepell, Schatz, and Bella-dine, at the tea-table, is too interested to be doubted. *Frizelation*,

flirtation, and *dangleation*, are now no more, and nothing less than a Lepell can restore them to life, but to tell you my opinion freely, the people you now converse with are much more alive than any of your old acquaintance; but tell me, Lady Hervey, do none of your morning companions warm your heart as well as your imagination? You see I cannot forgive you all the wit in your last letter. Is it because I suspect your sincerity? or do I envy what I cannot possess? No matter which; you may still always triumph: the world, though you allow it to be but sometimes in the right, will do you a justice that I deny you. You will always be admired; and even I, that condemn you, find I must love you with all my heart."*

LADY HERVEY TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Ickworth,

"October 7, 1728.

"Less rhetoric than you are mistress of, would be sufficient to convince me how very little merit I have. I should give it as much credit, but it would not give me so much grief from any other body as yourself: it is a very bitter pill, which you have forced down my throat, and it required at least as much gilding as you have bestowed upon it, in saying you cannot help loving me; but even that will not make me swallow it without uneasiness. The unpleasantness of the taste still remains in my mouth, and it requires many sweet things to remove it. I hope you design to administer them, and very soon. I shall with impatience expect a whole paper full.

"As to the *admiration* I am to receive (and for which you stand godmother to the world), I do assure you I know myself too well to expect it, and the world too well to desire it. I should be vastly more pleased with, and vain of your approbation, than of the admiration of all that misjudging herd which compose (what in that sense) we call *the world;* but I find I am in this, as in most other things, too unworthy to deserve, and too unlucky to obtain, what I most earnestly wish; for I have lately been in a situation which, could I as well represent as feel, would make you pity me. I have had frequent accounts from my lord of his being very much out of order abroad; and at home I have had the pain of seeing, and the fatigue of nursing, Lady Ann in a violent, and for a great while dangerous distemper. I wish she may yet be safe; if she does mend, it is as slowly as can be conceived. I pass twelve or thirteen hours a day in her room, and dine by her bed-side at seven or eight o'clock at night. I can never leave her whilst her fever is upon her,

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 20.

for she will take nothing but from me, nor do anything but at my request. Lord and Lady Bristol* are in the greatest concern for her. The latter has been herself so ill, that for many days she has not been able to bear going into her daughter's room. In short, it is a most melancholy distracted family, and I see very little prospect of Lady Ann's recovering for a great while, if at all.

"My spirits (which, you know, were once very good) are so much impaired, that I question if even Hampton Court breakfasts could recover them, or revive the *Schatz*, who is extinguished in a fatigued nurse, a grieved sister, and a melancholy wife. When I consider what improper ingredients these are to make an agreeable correspondent, I must beg pardon for taking up your time so long, though, if you knew how pleased I am to converse with you any way, and how very little else I have to please me, you would think I had more merit in releasing you now, than blame in having detained you so long; and as most people are apt to require reward for their merit, rather than think they deserve punishment for their faults, you must not wonder I desire and even expect to hear from you soon."†

LADY HERVEY TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"Ickworth,

"July 10, 1731.

"I am extremely obliged to dear Lady Suffolk for furnishing me with so good a reason for following my own inclination as that of following yours, or at least obeying your commands, which I am sure your good nature obliged you to lay upon me, knowing how much less agreeably I must have passed my time any other way till I have the pleasure of seeing you again. Your demand on me is a very kind, but a very unnecessary one; and I hope you made it thinking it the first, and knowing it to be the last. Depend on it, dear *Swiss* Countess, the esteem I have for you is equal (for superior it cannot be) to the claim of your desert, and no less lasting than I am sure that will be.

"The book I mentioned to you in my last is the *Cabala*, or *Letters of State*. There are some very curious things in it, and some very good letters, allowing for the difference of style and language in Queen Elizabeth's, King James's, and Charles the First's time: there are mighty pretty letters from the famous Earl of Essex; very artful, clever ones from Sir Francis Bacon

* Lord and Lady Bristol, Lord Hervey's parents.

† Add. MSS. 22628, f. 23.

who, though a sad fellow in his practice, was a very great man in theory; there are some very good ones from Lord Bristol and Lord Holland, relating to the treaties of marriage carried on by them for the Infanta of Spain and Henrietta of France. If you have never read it, it is worth your dipping into. I have now begun a book called *Journal de Roy Henri III. de France* [by Pierre de l'Estoille]. There are some diverting things in it; it is in very old French.

"Pray give me leave to question your ladyship in my turn, and to inquire into your studies of all kinds; for I shall not, like you, bound my curiosity to the *dead;* there are living books which I am sure you sometimes peruse, and which I should be very glad to have an account of: and in so large a library as there is at Hampton Court, though the generality of books are dull and insipid, it is impossible but you must find something worth transcribing. There are six volumes* which stand together that were published a good while ago, several of them bound in *calf:* if you will look into them, I cannot but think you will meet with things that may entertain, though not instruct. The first volume contains serious thoughts on the state of virginity, interspersed with occasional satires on several subjects. The second volume I have scarcely dipped into; but it seems to be a plain discourse on morality, and the unfitness of those things commonly called pleasures. The next, or at least that which I think follows, is a rhapsody; it is very verbose, and nothing in it: there is a very good print before it of the author's face. The fourth volume is neatly bound; the title of it, 'The Lady's Guide, or the Whole Art of Dress;' a book well worth perusing. The next is a miscellaneous work, in a pocket edition, printed on bad paper, in which are some essays on love and gallantry; a discourse on lying; tea-table chit-chat; an attempt on political subjects: the whole very prolix and unentertaining. The sixth volume is a folio; being a collection of the subjects, cause, and occasion of all the late court ballads; also a key to them, and to the jokes and witticisms of the most fashionable conversations now in town. This book is very diverting, and may be read by those of the meanest, as well as by those of the best understanding, being writ in the vulgar tongue."

The friendly rival of Molly Lepell in everyone's good graces was the Hon. Mary Bellenden, the youngest daughter of John, second Baron Bellenden, and Gay's "smiling Mary, soft and

* This is an allegory of the six Maids of Honour, but it is not possible with any certainty to identify each person. The first volume is undoubtedly Miss Meadows, the fourth probably Miss Carteret, the last Miss Vane. Others may have been Miss Dyve and Miss Mordaunt.

fair as down."* Everyone loved her, not only for her good looks, but for her fascinating vivacity, and for the high spirits to which allusion is made in "An Excellent New Ballad."† Lord Hervey described her as "incontestably the most agreeable, the most insinuating, and the most likeable woman of her time; made up of every ingredient likely to engage or attach a lover;"‡ and Horace Walpole commended her as "above all, for universal admiration," of all the Maids at Court. "Her face and person were charming," he wrote enthusiastically; "lively she was almost to *étourdie*, and so agreeable, that I never heard her mentioned afterwards by one of her contemporaries who did not prefer her as the most perfect creature they ever knew."§

Her high spirits, which she never made any effort to control, more than once landed her in trouble, and there was an occasion on which it took all Mrs. Howard's tact to secure forgiveness for her.

THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH|| TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"I have had a mind to give you this trouble for some time, only out of the regard I have for your opinion of me, and then I thought it was not worth troubling you with; but now that I know Miss Bellenden has in all companies said things of me that I am not capable of, I cannot help it, and to beg you to believe for no one thing in the world is truer than that at the Bath and from that time to this Miss Bellenden has had such a manner to me that everyone has wondered how I could bear her, which I here give you my word, Madam, since that time it has been only out of charity, which now she does not want; and if you will be so good to read her letter you will find the ridicules. I believe one may venture to say she is the first body that ever did that, however ungrateful people have been. I hope you have heard of my name a great while ago. The Porter promised he would write it down. I beg you will forgive this trouble, which you would not have had if I were not with a particular regard,

"Madam,

"Your most humble servant,

"MARLBOROUGH.

* *Pope's Welcome from Greece.*

† See p. 24.

‡ *Memoirs*, I. 55.

§ *Reminiscences*, CXXIX.

|| Henrietta (d. 1733), daughter of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, whom she succeeded in the title. She married Francis, second Earl of Godolphin. (See p. 18.)

"She is mightily pleased with her own letter and says she has answered me. I like it too. Therefore beg, Madam, I may have it again.

"I hope you are quite well now."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH

"I have received your letter. I am extremely concerned to find by it that Miss Bellenden has lost the honour of your friendship. I should think her inexcusable if she had ever made any little differences that may have happened between your Grace and her any part of her public conversation, but I hope, Madam, for her sake that all that you can charge her with is from the information of some who perhaps envied her happiness, and, indeed, I am led into this way of thinking from the great respect I have always heard her profess for you, and to do her justice I never saw her behave but with an honest open sincerity which made me believe her in earnest. Madam, if I have not mistaken what has occasioned this misunderstanding I should think myself very happy if I could be instrumental in restoring her to your favour, but if the proofs you have of her ingratitude are of another kind than common information, say I am heartily sorry much for Miss Bellenden who loses so valuable a friendship, and give me leave to say even to your Grace who has one friend less than I thought you had, and nobody wishes you more than I do, because you deserve them though you may want them less than anybody. I have returned the two letters: I can only say Miss Bellenden's might be meant very respectful and I am inclined to think it was and I hope you will find it so."†

The Prince of Wales fell a victim to Mary Bellenden's charms, and pursued her with unwelcomed attentions. She bore with him amiably enough, except when his gallantry threatened to become more indelicate than usual; but at no time had she any ambition which could be satisfied by becoming a royal mistress. She had no liking for him as a man, and his rank did not attract her; while his avarice disgusted her. "One evening, sitting by her, he took out his purse, and counted his money," Horace Walpole has related. "He repeated the enumeration: the giddy Bellenden lost her patience, and cried out, 'Sir, I cannot bear it! If you count your money any more I will go out of the room.' The clink of the gold did not tempt her any more than the person of his Royal Highness."‡ With him, on other

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 59. † Add. MSS. 22627, f. 61.

‡ *Reminiscences*, CXXX.

occasions, she did not let herself be bound by etiquette. "I hope you will put Miss Hawley* a little in the way of behaving before the Princess, such as not turning her back," she wrote to Mrs. Howard in 1720; "and one thing runs mightily in my head, which is, crossing her arms, as *I did to the Prince*, and told him I was not cold, but I liked to stand so."†

Mary Bellenden had given her heart to Colonel John Campbell, a Groom of the Bedchamber to his Royal Highness,‡ and the Prince, finding he could not interest her, suspected that she was in love with another, though without having any inkling who was the fortunate person. "He was even so generous," Walpole has stated, "as to promise her that if she would discover the object of her choice, and would engage not to marry without his privity, he would consent to the match, and be kind to her husband."§ She promised, and then, fearing his Royal Highness might throw obstacles in the way of the union, regretted the promise and finally ignored it, marrying secretly in May, 1720. Some months later the marriage was acknowledged, and she retired from Court. "The Prince never forgave the breach of her word," Walpole went on to say; "and whenever she went to the Drawing-rooms, as from her husband's situation she was sometimes obliged to do, though trembling at what she knew she was to undergo, the Prince always stepped up to her, and whispered some very harsh reproach in her ear."‖ Perhaps he realized that she had not trusted him to fulfil his undertaking. Nevertheless, in spite of his indignation, he retained Colonel Campbell in his post, and raised no objection to her appointment as Housekeeper of Somerset House. The marriage was entirely successful, and if Mrs. Selwyn said in a letter to Mrs. Howard (October 12, 1721), "I wish we were all in the Swiss Cantons again," this must not be taken as literally as some writers have done. The only trouble the young couple had was lack of means, and of this she complained humorously shortly after she left Court.

* Elizabeth Hawley, Mary Bellenden's niece, was the daughter of Miss Bellenden's half-sister, Lady Elizabeth Ramsay, who had married Francis Hawley, second Baron Hawley.

† Add. MSS. 22627, f. 90.

‡ See p. 36.

§ *Reminiscences*, CXXX.

‖ *Ibid.*

"O Gad, I am so sick of bills; for my part, I believe I shall never be able to hear them mentioned without casting up my accounts (*bills* are *accounts*, you know). I do not know how your bills go in London, but I am sure mine are not dropped, for I have paid one this morning as long as my arm, and as broad as my . . . I intend to send you a letter of attorney to enable you to dispose of my goods before I can leave this place—such is my condition. I was in hopes to have found the good effects of your present, but I have nothing to brag of but your goodness, which is always more than my desert. I am just a-going to the King's garden—I wish to God it belonged to my Lord-mayor, as the saying is. Pray give my duty to my *grandmother**, and tell her I love her, and wish her the desert of the good, and prosperity of the wicked. My dear Howard, God bless you, and send health *and liberty*. Don't show this, I charge you, at your peril."†

Apparently this lack of pence drove Colonel Campbell at this time to try his luck in South Sea stock, for which purpose he went to town, while his wife was at Bath, from where she wrote laughingly to Mrs. Howard of the perils to which her husband's fidelity might be exposed in the society of the metropolis. In the same strain, her correspondent wrote reassuringly:

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO MRS. CAMPBELL

"Richmond,
"1720.

"I have seen Mr. Campbell, and dare assure you there is nothing to be apprehended from that side. He bows to no other altars than those erected in 'Change-alley; but I confess I am not so sanguine as to your ladyship. Your inclinations seem finely warmed with Bath waters. I have often heard from that place, complaining how much they lay in folks' heads, but I own the effect has been as different as most people's persons are from that of Mrs. Campbell: the sprightly letter I received proves my argument good, but it is a bad omen for Mr. Campbell, and may portend something in or upon *his* head.

"Meadows, Carteret, and I want our stray shepherd, or an epistle from him. I am afraid we are the three contending goddesses—I fancy this is a pretty thought, and might be improved. We have a Juno, and a blue-eyed maid, but indeed no

* This is evidently a nickname for some person at Court, whose identity cannot now be traced.

† Add. MSS. 22627, f. 89.

Venus, content for a gold bauble to send her Paris to a Helen at Bath. Remember the fate of Troy, and do not forget your friends at the lodge; every one says they are your humble servants. I suppose they are so, but I desire only to answer for myself, who am your most obedient.

"I have kept the same grave unmeaning face I used to wear (which, to compliment me, you may call philosophical); the fall of stocks has given me a large field to amplify upon, and a thousand good reasons for its so doing, which I have therefore performed several times in our green-room to the edification of my hearers, and enforced every argument with that gesticulation of the hand for which I am so famous."*

When Colonel Campbell's father died in the spring of 1729, Mrs. Howard was anxious about the future of her friend and her husband, and she made inquiries of the Colonel's cousin, Lord Islay,† who was happily able to give her welcome tidings.

"I have been confined several days with a violent cold, but this morning I ventured out to try if I could serve poor Jack's family, and I can with great pleasure acquaint you that I look upon the business as done, and that in the handsomest manner imaginable. I have reason to believe the queen has prevented all applications either from the family or their competitors, by declaring her intentions to support the distressed. It is possible that it may not yet be proper to let it be known, but I could not delay a moment making you happy in the good news."‡

Mrs. Campbell bore her husband four sons and a daughter. She died in 1736. Upon the demise twenty-five years later of Lord Islay, who in 1743 succeeded as third Duke of Argyll, the dukedom devolved upon his cousin, Colonel Campbell, who enjoyed the dignity for nine years.

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 96.

† Archibald Campbell (1682–1761), younger son of Archibald Campbell, first Duke of Argyll; created Earl of Islay, 1706; elected representative Peer of Scotland; Lord Register of Scotland, 1714; Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal in Scotland, 1721; succeeded his brother John third Duke of Argyll, 1743.

‡ Add. MSS. 22628, f. 52.

CHAPTER V

MRS. HOWARD AT COURT: *A LIAISON DE CONVENANCE*

Mrs. Howard the "star" at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge—Her admirers—Her appearance and qualities described by Horace Walpole, Chesterfield and Hervey—Her caution and neutrality earn her the nickname of "the Swiss"—Her apartments called "the Swiss Cantons"—Pope's lines on her—The Prince of Wales attracted by Mary Bellenden—She does not reciprocate his affection—He turns his attention to Mrs. Howard—She becomes his mistress—Horace Walpole's account of the *liaison*—The reasons for her surrender—Croker asserts that Mrs. Howard's relations with the Prince were platonic—Rebutting evidence—The views of Sir Walter Scott and John Heneage Jesse—Croker subsequently withdraws his contention—The Princess aware of the *liaison*—The financial advantages to Mrs. Howard of her connection with the Prince—The Princess's view of her husband's infidelities—She sanctions the irregularities to maintain her ascendancy—The Prince makes her the *confidante* of his love-affairs—"The Wallmoden."

THE bright particular star at Leicester House and at Richmond Lodge was Mrs. Howard. Her friends, indeed, used to say that she was like a nightingale among the bats and owls of the Court. Affectionate devotion was showered on her from almost every quarter. The Maids of Honour loved her, and Molly Lepell and Mary Bellenden were her friends to the day of their death. Prior's Kitty was her constant correspondent, and old Lord Peterborough* treated her to an exhibition of formal gallantry. Pope was her very humble servant, and so was Gay, and Arbuthnot† too; while Lord Bathurst's‡ liking for her was so obvious that it was suspected, erroneously, that he was her lover. Swift enjoyed her society, until baulked

* Charles Mordaunt, third Earl of Peterborough (1658–1755). (See p. 85.)

† John Arbuthnot (1667–1755), M.D., 1696; physician to Queen Anne; author of the "History of John Bull," 1712; an intimate of Swift, Pope, Gay and other men of letters.

‡ Allen Bathurst, Baron Bathurst (1684–1775).

ambition led him unjustly to revile her, when Lady Betty Germaine took up the cudgels on her behalf, and only just escaped quarrelling with the great man.

Mrs. Howard, indeed, had much to recommend her; good looks, a sense of humour, and a kindly nature. She was, Horace Walpole has recorded, "of a just height, well-made, extremely fair, with the finest light brown hair; was remarkably genteel, and always well-dressed with taste and simplicity. These were her personal charms, for her face was regular rather than beautiful; and those charms she retained with little diminution to the death at the age of seventy-nine. Her mental qualities were by no means shining; her eyes and countenance showed her character, which was grave and mild."* Her description by one of her oldest friends supplements, and occasionally contradicts, this account. "Her figure was above the middle-size and well-shaped," Lord Chesterfield wrote. "Her face was not beautiful but pleasing. Her hair was extremely fair, and remarkably fine. Her arms were square and lean, that is, ugly. Her countenance was an undecided one, and announced neither good nor ill-nature, neither sense nor the want of it, neither vivacity nor dullness."† It is strange that neither Walpole nor Lord Chesterfield alludes to her complexion, which was so notoriously pale that her friends rallied her upon it, and Lady Lansdowne‡ sent her rouge from Paris. Lord Hervey praised her highly, which is the more to her credit because he was of the opposite faction at Court. "Good sense, good breeding and good nature were qualities which even her enemies could not deny her; nor do I know any one good or agreeable quality which those who knew her more intimately would not as readily allow her," so runs his encomium. "She was civil to everybody, friendly to many, and unjust to none: in short, she had a good head and a good heart, but had to do with a man who was incapable of testing the one or valuing the other."§ Her retentive memory made her, especially in her later years, a most interesting

* *Reminiscences*, CXXXIII.

† *Character of Lady Suffolk* (*Works*, ed. Mahon).

‡ Lady Mary Villiers (d. 1735), married, first, Thomas Thynne, and, secondly, George Granville, Baron Lansdowne.

§ *Memoirs*, I. 56.

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.
From an engraving by Heath at the British Museum.

[*To face p.* 74.

companion, but it had the drawback of making her too circumstantial in trifles. It is interesting to note that, though among her most intimate friends she numbered many of the greatest men of letters of her day, she had no taste for literature, and made "no pretension to judge of poetry."*

If Mrs. Howard had a fault, it was that she erred on the side of caution and neutrality, which obtained for her the nickname of "The Swiss"—whence her apartments at Leicester House were called "The Swiss Cantons." More than one writer has remarked on what Mr. Walter Sichel happily calls "the cold coyness" of Mrs. Howard,† and Pope especially complained of it. "Lady Suffolk has a strange power over me," he wrote to Martha Blount in 1734. "She would not stir a day's journey either east or west for one, though she had dying or languishing friends on each quarter, who wanted and wished to see her. But I am following her chariot-wheels three days through rocks and waters, and shall be at her feet on Sunday night. I suppose she will be at cards, and will receive me as coldly as if I were the archdeacon of the place."‡ He made special reference to this defect in one of his "Moral Essays":

> "'*Yet Chloe§ sure was formed without a spot.*'—
> *Nature in her then erred not, but forgot.*
> '*With every pleasing, every prudent part,*
> *Say, what can Chloe want?*'—*She wants a heart.*
> *She speaks, behaves, and acts, just as she ought,*
> *But never, never reached one generous thought.*
> *Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,*
> *Content to dwell in decencies for ever.*
> *So very reasonable, so unmoved,*
> *As never yet to love, or to be loved.*
> *She, while her lover pants upon her breast,*
> *Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;*
> *And when she sees her friend in deep despair,*
> *Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair!*

* Pope to Aaron Hill, October 9, 1731 (*Works*, ed. Elwin and Courthope, X. 24).

† *Bolingbroke and His Times*, II. 69.

‡ *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 317.

§ Chloe was Lord Peterborough's name for Mrs. Howard.

" Forbid it, Heaven, a favour or a debt,
She e'er should cancel—but she may forget.
Safe is your secret still in Chloe's ear ;
But none of Chloe's shall you ever hear.
Of all her dears she never slandered one,
But cares not if a thousand are undone.
Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead ?
*She bids the footmen put it in her head.**
Chloe is prudent—would you too be wise ?
Then never break your heart when Chloe dies."†

Almost as soon as the Court of George I. was settled at St. James's, the Prince of Wales was attracted by the charming Mary Bellenden, who, as has been said, did not reciprocate his affection. His Royal Highness made Mrs. Howard the *confidante* of his passion, and it was in her apartments that he used to meet Miss Bellenden. When he realized finally that his overtures in that quarter would always be rejected, he transferred his attentions to Mrs. Howard. When this happened cannot definitely be stated.‡

No one ever suspected that the Prince had his way with Mary Bellenden ; few, however, doubted that he was entirely successful with Mrs. Howard. That egregious gossip, Horace Walpole, was quite convinced of this, and put it on record that, after Miss Bellenden's marriage in 1720, Mrs. Howard " succeeded to her friend's part of favourite—but not to her resistance."§ Nor did he credit her with any high motive for her surrender. He did not " suppose that love had any share in the sacrifice she made of her virtue," but thought she gave way because she " had felt poverty, and was far from disliking power." Walpole points out that Mrs. Howard did not obtrude her *liaison*. In-

* Pope, dining with Mrs. Howard one day, heard her order her footman to put her in mind to send to know how Martha Blount, who was ill, had passed the night.

† *Moral Essays, Epistle II. The Character of Women.*

‡ The late W. H. Wilkins in his " Caroline the Illustrious " (I. 95), dated the *liaison* between the Prince and Mrs. Howard to the days when they were at Herrenhausen ; but he gives no authority for this statement, and, indeed, all the accepted accounts are against it.

§ *Reminiscences*, CXXXI.

deed, he wrote, "from the steady decorum of Mrs. Howard, I should conclude that she would have preferred the advantages of her situation to the ostentatious *éclat* of it." He did not, however, suggest how the advantages of her situation, other than financial, could be obtained unless the fact of her connection with the Prince was known, anyhow in Court circles; for what would be the use of the power she desired, if, for fear it should be known she possessed it, she dared not exercise it? The financial benefits she derived were, he thought—erroneously, as it has since transpired—confined to a large gift of money for the purchase of Marble Hill, Twickenham.

The privacy that Mrs. Howard desired was not, however, to be had. "The Prince," Walpole went on to say, "though very amorous, was certainly attracted by a silly idea he had entertained of gallantry being becoming, than by a love of variety; and he added the more egregious folly of fancying that inconstancy proved he was not governed; but so awkwardly did he manage that artifice, that it but demonstrated more clearly the influence of his consort." His Royal Highness, indeed, thought it his duty to have a mistress, as his father and his forbears. Yet it is as sure as anything can be that he cared for the Princess more than for any other woman he ever met, and there is the authority of Horace Walpole for stating that he never described his idea of beauty but he drew the picture of his wife.* As, in the circumstances, he took a mistress because she was a fitting appanage of his royal state, it would clearly have been against his views not to have acknowledged her as such; and, indeed, he was at no pains to keep the matter secret.

The story thus set forth by Walpole in 1788 (and published ten years later) was that which was generally held, and it remained unchallenged for nearly a century after it first obtained currency in the days when George II. was Prince of Wales. In 1824, however, the anonymous editor—who was no other than John Wilson Croker—of a selection of the "Letters to and from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk," while admitting that "the world certainly suspected a more tender attachment," asserted his belief that the relations between Mrs. Howard and the Prince were platonic, and he was at pains to urge reasons for the faith

* *Reminiscences*, CXXXV.

that was in him. He based his chivalrous defence of the lady upon the fact that the only foundation for the story was the "reminiscences" of Walpole, who therein "made direct charges of this nature, with such confidence and particularity, that the transitory scandal of the day has been, on his authority, embodied in the graver pages of history." While he could not deny that in her later years Mrs. Howard (then Lady Suffolk) was on terms of intimacy with Walpole, he asserted that "most of what Walpole relates of her early life he had from his father [Sir Robert Walpole] and his father's friends, who were inflamed with violent personal and political prejudices against Mrs. Howard." From this he deduced that, "It is not, therefore, surprising that stories, thus envenomed by faction, should be often unfounded and always exaggerated." Besides, he contended, it was common knowledge that Walpole had a decided antipathy to George II., and "the friendship of his later years for Lady Suffolk was not strong enough to control his early inclination to depreciate that monarch."* He then proceeded to examine the statements in the "Reminiscences." He pointed out that Walpole says that the Prince took no notice of Mrs. Howard until after Mary Bellenden's marriage, which took place in 1720, at which time Mrs. Howard had been nearly ten years acquainted with his Royal Highness; but this, as Croker might have seen, is a singularly inconclusive argument.

It is not necessary in the light of what is now known to sift Croker's arguments in detail. The financial benefits which the lady derived from her intimacy with the Prince Croker dismissed cavalierly. "Eminently disinterested," he wrote, "the only pecuniary favour she seems to have derived from her royal master and mistress, for so long and arduous a service, was some assistance towards the acquisition of the little villa of Marble Hill, near Twickenham; the original cost of which, however, with all the subsequent buildings, did not exceed £10,000 or £12,000."† He wrote as if Marble Hill had been purchased at the end of Mrs. Howard's score of years' service at Court in 1734—whereas it was secured in 1723; and as if £10,000 or £12,000

* *Suffolk Correspondence*, I., IX.

† *Suffolk Correspondence*, I., XVII.

was but a natural reward to be bestowed upon a member of the Household by one of the most careful kings who ever sat upon a British throne. Finally, he asserted that "he has not, in Mrs. Howard's correspondence with the King, nor the notes of her conversation with the Queen, nor in any of her most confidential papers, found a single trace of the feeling which Walpole so confidently asserts."* This last, however, is but a further proof of the caution of "the Swiss."

All this was, of course, special pleading, and Croker himself seems to have been aware of it, since he alluded to "the peculiar position of Lady Suffolk at Court."† Even at that time (1824), however, it seems to have misled no one. In the article on the "Suffolk Correspondence" in the *Edinburgh Review*,‡ the writer remarked that "Henrietta Hobart, Countess of Suffolk, was, as all the world, except the editor of these volumes, knows, for many years the mistress of George II."; and Sir Walter Scott, treating of the work in the *Quarterly Review*, was of the same opinion. "Upon the accession of the House of Hanover," Scott wrote, "Mrs. Howard became Bedchamber Woman to the Princess, and enjoyed so great a share in the confidence of the royal couple, that the world presumed an attachment towards her on the part of the Prince prudently connived at by his politic consort—a presumption which was increased to something like certainty by Mrs. Howard refusing to quit her situation in the Household even in obedience to the commands of her husband. . . . We regret that his researches have not enabled him to state whether it is true that the restive husband had a pension of £1,200, for which Walpole tells us that he sold his own noisy honour and the possession of his lady. . . . For our own parts, without believing all Walpole's details, and in fact disbelieving many of them, we substantially agree in his opinion (which indeed seems to be that of the editor) that the King's friendship was by no means platonic or refined; but that the Queen and Mrs. Howard, by mutual forbearance, good sense, and decency, contrived to diminish the scandal."§ One other opinion may be given—that of John

* *Ibid.*, I., X.
† *Ibid.*, I., XXVIII.
‡ Vol. XL., 147; March, 1824.
§ *Quarterly Review*, XXX. 544, 545; January, 1824.

Heneage Jesse, which, though not based on original research, is interesting as giving the popular view at the time (1843) when it was penned, of the lady to whom he alluded as "the celebrated mistress of George II., and one of the most decent of courtesans."* "To this view of the probable immaculacy of Mrs. Howard," he wrote, "we are certainly not disposed to subscribe. For many years that lady was the accredited mistress of George II.; she consented to reap the advantages, with the scandal and obloquy, of that situation; the most knowing and best informed persons of the day paid their court to her as the reigning favourite; and, moreover, she seems to have made not the slightest attempt to efface the general, and hitherto undisputed, impression that she had conferred her favours on the King. Sir Robert Walpole, with his great acumen and intimate acquaintance with the intrigues of the court, never for a moment seems to have doubted the nature of their intercourse; his son, Horace, who sat morning after morning with her in her old age, never heard it contradicted by her; and, moreover, the certainty that the Queen herself was fully convinced of the nature of her husband's feelings towards Mrs. Howard is proved by an anecdote, which, though not a little curious, is of too indelicate a nature to be inserted. If Mrs. Howard, in fact, were *not* the mistress of George II., under what circumstances did she obtain a place and a peerage for her brother, and a tolerable fortune for herself? What possible reason was there for the Queen perpetually treating, and attempting to mortify her, as a rival? What was the object of the King's nightly visits to her apartments? and, notoriously fond as he was of money, why should he have presented her at one time with as much as £10,000 or £12,000, or settled an annuity on her husband of £1,200 a year? To conclude, we have only to call to mind the grossness of the King's character, and his amatory temperament, and we shall freely admit how very unlikely he was to content himself with a mere platonic attachment, or to relieve that woman—who consented to fulfil the ostensible post of being his mistress—from the usual consequences of acting so hazardous a part."†

If, after this, lingering doubts were still entertained in some

* *Memoirs of the Court of England*, III. 402.
† *Memoirs of the Court of England*, III. 412

quarters as to the accuracy of Horace Walpole's narrative as regards the main issue, these doubts were entirely demolished by the publication in 1848 of the Memoirs of John Lord Hervey. By the irony of fate, the editing of this work was entrusted to Croker, who, after perusing it, withdrew his contention as to the virtue of Mrs. Howard, and, perforce, ate his earlier words, though as delicately as possible. "I noticed in the Preface to the 'Suffolk Papers,' with perhaps too much indulgence," he said in a footnote, "the opinion that the friendship between the King and Mrs. Howard was platonic."* There was no question of "indulgence," for the *liaison* was now ruthlessly exposed to the vulgar eye. In these volumes, there is an extract from a letter written in 1735 by George II., then in Hanover, to the Queen, on the receipt of the news of Mrs. Howard's second marriage, in which he referred to her as "*ma vieille maîtresse;*"† the record of a conversation between Hervey and the Queen, in which her Majesty alluded to her as "the King's *guenipe*" (in English, trull);‡ and an account of the financial benefit which she derived from the connection.§ "The Prince passed every evening of his life three or four hours in Mrs. Howard's lodgings, who, as Dresser to the Princess, always in waiting, was lodged all the year round in the Court," Lord Hervey wrote in 1727. "Miss Bellenden continued to be now and then of these parties till she married, but after that these visits became uninterrupted *tête-à-têtes* with Mrs. Howard, that subsist to this hour."‖ The Prince always went to her at nine o'clock, and it is amusing to learn that he was so precise that if he was ready a little earlier, he would walk up and down his room, watch in hand, until the hour struck.

That the financial advantages to Mrs. Howard of the connection were greater than had been thought is also to be gleaned from Lord Hervey's "Memoirs." The Queen told him in 1735 that Mrs. Howard "had had £2,000 a year constantly from the King whilst he was Prince, and £3,200 ever since he was King,

* *Hervey's Memoirs*, I. 56, note 25.
† *Ibid*, II. 183.
‡ *Ibid*, II. 187.
§ *Ibid*, II. 185.
‖ Hervey: *Memoirs*, II. 55.

besides little dabs of money both before and since he came to the Crown."* The reason for the increase in her allowance is duly set forth later, but it may here be said that the extra £1,200 a year was paid to Howard for his complaisance.† This income was, of course, exclusive of Mrs. Howard's official salary, first as a Woman of the Bedchamber, which probably did not exceed £300 a year while Caroline was Princess of Wales, and £400 a year after she became Queen, and then as Groom of the Stole, which was worth £800 a year.‡ After her retirement from Court, Lady Suffolk (as she then was) still received from the King, by way of pension, an income, which may be estimated at £2,000 a year ; but this, of course, ceased at his death.

There have been writers who contended that Caroline was ignorant of the relations between her consort and Mrs. Howard. Indeed, Croker even went so far as to say, " It is still more remarkable that though Mrs. Howard's favour with the Prince of Wales seems gradually to increase, that with the Princess kept pace with it. This latter circumstance should, it may be thought, have prevented any scandal which might otherwise have arisen from the former."§ But his contention argues extraordinary ignorance of her Royal Highness's character. Lord Chesterfield declared that she favoured and even promoted the Prince's gallantries||—a statement which greatly incensed Archdeacon Coxe. " This severe representation," said the latter, " is totally devoid of truth, and proves little knowledge of her real disposition. It was a principle with her not to disgust the King with remonstrances, or to appear dissatisfied with his attentions to other women. But certainly never wife felt or lamented a husband's infidelities more than herself, although she had too much good sense and prudence, and too much respect for her character, to treat her rivals with marks of ill-humour, or to show, by her outward behaviour, symptoms of jealousy and displeasure. She was always able to disguise her feelings and conceal her uneasiness. . . . To her particular friends Queen

* *Ibid.* II. 185.

† See p. 172.

‡ *Political State of Great Britain*, XLI. 652.

§ *Suffolk Correspondence*, I., IX.

|| *Works* (ed. Mahon), II.

Caroline was not wanting in complaints of the King's infidelities. . . . In fact, the forced complacency of her outward behaviour was a violent effort of prudence and discretion." Surely, the defence is at least as damning as the attack! Caroline shows this complaisance, not for the benefit of the country, or for the good of the dynasty, certainly not from any devotion to the man, but solely for the privilege of preserving her ascendancy! She might not promote her consort's *liaisons*, but she most certainly could not ignore them, for, strange as it appears, he selected her, from all the people in the kingdom, for his *confidante*. This, indeed, was so notorious that Mrs. Selwyn once laughingly said to him that he should be the last man with whom she would have an intrigue, as she knew he would tell the Princess. To the end he persevered in this habit, and in 1734 he wrote to her from Hanover, "You must love the Wallmoden,* for she loves me." Proof of this was forthcoming in some admissions from Walpole, when he was dining with Lord Chancellor King.† "On this occasion," Lord King has written, "Walpole let me into several secrets relating to the King and Queen—that the King constantly wrote to her long letters of two or three pages, being generally of all his actions, what he did every day, even to minute things, and particularly of his amours, what women he admired . . . and that the Queen, to continue him a disposition to do what she desired, returned as long letters, and approved even of his amours; not scrupling to say that she was but one woman and an old woman, and that he might love more and younger women; . . . by which perfect subserviency to his will she effected whatever she desired, without which it was impossible to keep him within bounds."‡ Yet further evidence is forthcoming. "It is certain, too," Lord Hervey has recorded,

* Amalie Sophie von Wallmoden (1704–1765), *née* von Wendt, married 1727, became the mistress of George II. in 1735, and after the death of Caroline two years later she came to England at his request. In 1739 she was divorced from her husband, and in the following year was created Countess of Yarmouth. Her relations with the King endured until his death.

† Peter King, first Baron King (1669–1734), Lord Chancellor, 1725–1733.

‡ Campbell: *Lives of the Chancellors*, IV. 633.
The ellipses are explained by Campbell: "I have been obliged to omit some other expressions imputed to her Majesty as too coarse to be copied."

" that from the beginning of this new engagement [with Madame de Wallmoden] the King acquainted the Queen by letter of every step he took in it—of the growth of his passion, the progress of his applications, and their success—of every word as well as every action that passed—so minute a description of her person, that, had the Queen been a painter, she might have drawn her rival's picture at six hundred miles' distance. He added, too, the account of his buying her, and what he gave her, which, considering the rank of the purchaser and the merits of the purchase as he set them forth, I think he had no great reason to brag of, when the first price, according to his report, was only one thousand ducats—a much greater proof of his economy than his passion."*

* *Memoirs*, II. 167.

CHAPTER VI

AN ADMIRABLE CRICHTON OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: LORD PETERBOROUGH

Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough—Soldier, sailor, and courtier—Gallant and man about town—A founder of "The Brothers"—Swift's affection for him—He expresses his admiration in verse—Lord Peterborough's high spirits—A dandy in his youth—Careless of appearances in later days—At Bath in 1725—A patron of letters—His verses, "I said to my heart between sleeping and waking," addressed to Mrs. Howard—His relations with her those of innocent gallantry—Thackeray accurately sums up the position—Lord Peterborough's "love-letters" to her merely a literary exercise—Horace Walpole's praise of his wit—Swift's appreciation of him as correspondent—Mrs. Howard enlists the aid of Gay to answer Lord Peterborough's effusions—Her letters to Gay—The correspondence between Mrs. Howard and Lord Peterborough—Some of the letters exchanged between them from 1717 to 1725—Lord Peterborough's secret marriage with Anastasia Robinson, the singer—Gay's lines about her—Lord Peterborough chastises Senesino for insolence to Mrs. Robinson, and challenges Lord Stanhope to a duel—Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's spiteful but humorous comment upon these incidents—Mrs. Robinson retires from the stage—Lord Peterborough in 1730 complains of ill-health to Mrs. Howard—He acknowledges Mrs. Robinson as his wife—His last letter to Mrs. Howard, now Lady Suffolk, July, 1735—His death—His memoirs burnt by his widow.

IN the inner circle of Mrs. Howard's intimates was Charles Mordaunt, third Earl of Peterborough, who had been everything by turns, and in each employment had won renown. He had been soldier, sailor, a member of William III.'s Household, politician, diplomatist, and to the end of his days remained a gallant and a man about town. He was as much at home in intellectual society as at Court, and, when Prior* was expelled from the Kit-cat Club as a Tory, he busied himself, with St. John† and Swift,‡ in inaugurating in 1711 the coterie of "The

* Matthew Prior (1664–1721), poet and diplomatist.

† Henry St. John (1678-1751), created Viscount Bolingbroke, 1712.

‡ Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), politician and man of letters.

Brothers," which met on Thursdays for the highly delectable purposes of the improvement of friendship and the encouragement of letters, and included among its members, besides its founders, Prior, Harley* and Granville.† An Admirable Crichton of his time, Gay, Arbuthnot, Pope and Swift loved him and sang his praises. "At seven this evening, as we were sitting after dinner at the Lord Treasurer [Harley]'s, a servant said Lord Peterborough was at the door," Swift wrote kindly on January 10, 1713. "The Lord Treasurer, Lord Bolingbroke, went out to meet him, and brought him in. He had just returned from abroad, where he had been about a year [on a special mission to Vienna, Frankfort and Italy]. As soon as he saw me, he left the Duke of Ormonde and other lords, and ran and kissed me before he spoke to them, but chid me terribly for not writing to him, which I never did this last time he was abroad, not knowing where he was, and he changed places so often it was impossible a letter should overtake him. He left England with a bruise, by his coach overturning, that made him spit blood, and was so ill we expected every post to hear of his death; but he outrode it, or outdrank it, or something, and is come home lustier than ever. He is at least sixty, and has more spirits than any young man I know of in England. He has got the old Oxford Regiment of Horse [now the Horse Guards Blue], and I believe will have a Garter.‡ I love the hang-dog dearly."§ Swift wrote of him not only with affection, but also in terms of high admiration:

> "*Mordanto fills the trump of fame,*
> *The Christian worlds his deeds proclaim,*
> *And prints are crowded with his name.*
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "*Shines in all climates like a star;*
> *In senates bold, and fierce in war;*
> *A land commander, and a tar.*"‖

* Robert Harley (1661–1724), created Earl of Oxford, 1711.

† George Granville (1667–1735), created Baron Lansdowne, 1711; poet and statesman.

‡ He was invested a Knight of the Garter in the following August.

§ Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott).

‖ "To the Earl of Peterborough, who commanded the British forces in Spain."

Some idea of his high spirits, which he retained almost to the end of his long life, may be gathered from two stories told of him. He was entertaining a damsel at a coffee-house, where there was a very fine piping canary, and nothing would content his companion but that she must have the bird. The proprietors refused to sell it; the girl demanded it as a proof of the truth of his protestations. He was in despair, but at last a brilliant idea came to him. He sought, and found, another canary exactly similar in colour and size but voiceless, and, during the woman's momentary absence, contrived an exchange. The sequel is amusing. Shortly after the Revolution, he went again to the coffee-house, and entering into conversation with the landlady, asked if she had never regretted having refused the large sum he had offered for the songster. "Most certainly not," she replied, to his great surprise, "I would not take any money for him now, since—would you believe it?—from the time our good King James was forced to go abroad and leave us, the dear creature has not sung a note." That is a tale of his youth, this of his middle age. Driving through the Strand in his coach, he saw an actor in full Court dress, with white silk stockings, delicately picking his way through the dirty street. The sight tickled him. He jumped out, drew his sword, and rushed at him. The man, who thought he was mad, fled as if for his life, regardless of the mud. Lord Peterborough followed until the actor was bespattered from head to foot. He then re-entered his coach and drove off. Really he should have had some sympathy with his victim, for in his early days he was a dandy of the first water, although in his later days he abandoned all pretensions of a beau, and went deliberately to the other extreme. "Lord Peterborough," Lady Hervey wrote to Mrs. Howard, from Bath, June 7, 1725, "is here, and has been so for some time, though by his dress one would believe he had not designed to make any stay; for he wears boots all day, and, as I hear, must do so, having brought no shoes with him. It was a comical sight to see him with his blue ribbon and star, and a cabbage under each arm, or a chicken in his hand, which, after he himself has purchased at market, he carries home for his dinner."*

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 13.

Not only a patron of letters, Peterborough himself occasionally wooed the muse, and addressed some lines to Mrs. Howard which received for the writer the honour of inclusion in Walpole's "Royal and Noble Authors," and drew from Thackeray, more than six-score years after, a tribute to those "charming verses, in which there was truth as well as grace."

"I said to my heart, between sleeping and waking,
'Thou wild thing, that always art leaping or aching,
What black, brown, or fair, in what clime, in what nation,
By turns has not taught thee a pit-a-patation?'

"Thus accused, the wild thing gave this sober reply:
'See, the heart without motion, though Celia pass by?
Nor the beauty she has, nor the wit that she borrows,
Gave the eye any joy, or the heart any sorrows.

"'When our Sappho applauds—she, whose wit so refined
I am forced to applaud with the rest of mankind—
Whatever she says is with spirit and fire;
Ev'ry word I attend, but I only admire.

"'Prudentia as vainly would put in her claim,
Ever gazing on heaven, though man is her aim,
'Tis love, not devotion, that turns up her eyes—
Those stars of this world are too good for the skies.

"'But Cloe so lively, so easy, so fair,
Her wit so genteel without art, without care:
When she comes in my way—the motion, the pain,
The leapings, the achings, return all again.'

"O wonderful creation! A woman of reason!
Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season;
When so easy to guess who this angel should be,
Would one think Mrs. Howard ne'er dreamt it was she?"

The relations between Lord Peterborough and Mrs. Howard still seem to puzzle some folk. "In Lord Peterborough, Mrs.

Howard had an admirer of a very different stamp from George II.," one writer has summed up his view. " It is not clear when this intimacy commenced, how long it lasted, or whether it was ever carried beyond the bounds of flirtation."* The problems here set forth are easy of solution. Colonel Russell, the Earl's biographer,† has stated that they became acquainted in 1717 —it is probable that they met soon after Lord Peterborough's nephew, Charles Mordaunt, married that year Mrs. Howard's friend, the widowed Lady Mohun. There is certainly little doubt that the bulk of the undated correspondence which has been preserved was written between 1719 and 1725 ; and it is certain that the intimacy endured to the end of his life, for he wrote to her only a few months before his death. With as much of certainty it can be said that the intimacy never went beyond friendship, for in an age when every item of passing gossip was sedulously recorded, nowhere is there to be found even the barest suggestion attributing to Mrs. Howard any intrigue except with her royal lover. The position is best diagnosed by Thackeray, himself a philanderer after Lord Peterborough's heart. " When Lord Peterborough was seventy years old, that indomitable youth addressed some flaming love-, or rather gallantry-, letters to Mrs. Howard," he wrote. " Curious relics they are of the romantic manner of wooing sometimes in use in those days. It is not passion ; it is not love ; it is gallantry ; a mixture of earnest and acting—high-flown compliments, profound bows, vows, sighs, and ogles, in the manner of the Clelie romances and Millamount and Doricourt in the comedy. There was a vast elaboration of ceremonies and etiquette, of raptures : a regulation form for kneeling and wooing, which has quite passed out of our downright manners. Henrietta Howard accepted the noble Earl's philandering, answered the queer love-letters with due acknowledgment, made a profound curtsey to Peterborough's profound bows, and got Johnny Gay to help her in the composition of her letters in reply to her old knight."‡

* J. M. Rigg : Henrietta Howard, Countess of Suffolk (*Dictionary of National Biography*).

† Vol. II., p. 282.

‡ *The Four Georges* : *George the Second.*

The correspondence is certainly interesting as an example of an early eighteenth century nobleman playing the gallant, and it is a reasonable assumption that the letters were written as literary exercises and so interpreted by the recipient. That Mrs. Howard delighted in the correspondence is evident. She was flattered that one whom such men as Swift and Pope eulogized should single her out for attention, and she kept the ball a-rolling. She was anxious, however, to acquit herself creditably in the game. Though capable of inditing a good letter, she did not feel herself the equal of a personage whom Horace Walpole described as, " One of those men of careless wit and negligent grace, who scatter a thousand *bon-mots* and idle verses, which we painful compilers gather and hoard, till the owners stare to find themselves authors," and of whom Swift said, " He writes so well, I have no mind to answer him, and so kind that I must answer him." She cast around for assistance, and her choice alighted upon Gay. " The whole affair is curious," Croker commented upon it. " The liveliest man in England sits down and writes love-letters so appalling, that one of the liveliest and most ready women in England thinks it necessary to employ an assistant to answer him ; and the assistant she selects is—of all men alive—Johnny Gay—the most simple of mankind, and who . . . became a mere bungler, even in letter-writing, as soon as he attempted the line of ' verbosa et grandis epistola.' " Her letter inviting Gay to come to her assistance has been preserved :

" After you have told me that you hate writing letters, it would be very ungrateful not to thank you for so many as you have written for me. Acting contrary to one's inclinations, for the service of those one likes, is a strong proof of friendship ; yet, as it is painful, it ought never to be exacted but in case of great necessity ; as such I look upon that correspondence in which I have engaged you.

" Perhaps you think I treat you very oddly, that, while I own myself afraid of a man of wit, and make that a pretence to ask your assistance, I can write to you myself without any concern ; but do me justice, and believe it is, that I think it requires something more than wit to deserve esteem. So it is less uneasy for me to write to you than to the other ; for I should fancy I purchased the letters I received (though very

witty) at too great an expense, if at the least hazard of having my real answers exposed.

"The inclosed* will discover that I did not make use of every argument with which you had furnished me; but I had a reason, of which I am not at this time disposed to make you a judge. Conquest is the last thing a woman cares to resign; but I should be very sorry to have you in the desperate condition of my knight-errant. No! I would spare you, out of self-interest, to secure to me those I have made by your assistance."†

"Gay's reply, unfortunately, is lost, but her next letter to him has been preserved:

"I am very much pleased to find you are of my opinion. I have always thought that the man who will be nothing but a man of wit oftener disobliges than entertains the company. There is nothing tries our patience more than that person who arrogantly is ever showing his superiority over the company he is engaged in. He, and his fate, I think very like the woman whose whole ambition is only to be handsome. *She* is in continual care about her own charms, and neglects the world; and *he* is always endeavouring to be more witty than all the world; which make them both disagreeable companions.

"The warmth with which I attack wit will, I am afraid, be thought to proceed from the same motive which makes the old and ugly attack the young and handsome; but if you examine well all those of the character I have mentioned, you will find they are generally but pretenders to either wit or beauty; and, in justification of myself, I can say, and that with great sincerity, I respect wit with judgment, and beauty with humility, wherever I meet it.

"I have sent the inclosed, and desire an answer. I make no more apologies, for I take you to be in earnest; but, if you can talk of sincerity without having it, I am glad it is in my power to punish you—for sincerity is not only the favourite expression of my knight-errant, but it is my darling virtue.

"If I agree with you, that wit is very seldom to be found in sincerity, it is because I think neither wit nor sincerity is often found; but daily experience shows us it is want of wit, and not too much, makes people insincere."‡

It is impossible to say with which compositions Gay helped Mrs. Howard, and it would be an interesting occupation

* Probably one of Lord Peterborough's answers.

† Add. MSS, 22626, f. 27. ‡ Add. MSS. 22626, f. 28.

to endeavour to trace the passages which emanated from his pen. Of the numerous letters which have been preserved, a few are given here.

THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"As I can as well live without meat and sleep as without thinking of her who has possession of my soul, so to find some relief, in never having any conversation with this adored lady, I have been forced, when alone, to make many and many a dialogue betwixt her and myself; but, alas! madam, the conclusions are always in her favour, and I am often most cruelly condemned by myself—nay more, her indifference and almost all her rigour are approved.

"Permit me to give you an account of my last duet without my partner; and as by the original articles of our scribbling treaty you were sincerely to tell me your opinion, so remember your long silence, and give me an answer to this.

"On my part, I was representing to hear the violence, the sincerity of my passion; but what I most insisted on was, that, in most circumstances, it was different from that of other men. It is true I confessed, with common lovers, she was the person that I wished should *grant;* but with this addition, that she was the only woman that I could allow to *refuse.* In a word, I am resolved, nay content, to be only hers, though it may be impossible she should ever be mine.

"To bear injuries or miseries insensibly were a vain pretence—not to resent, not to feel, is impossible; but, when I dare venture to think she is unjust or cruel, my revenge falls upon all of her sex but herself. I hate, detest, and renounce all other creatures in hoop-petticoats; and, by a strange weakness, can only wish well to her who has the power and will to make me miserable.

"Commonly, lovers are animated by the gay look, the blooming cheeks, and the red lips of the mistress; but, heavens! what do I feel when I see anguish and paleness invade that charming face? My soul is in a mutiny against those powers that suffer it, and my heart perfectly melts away in tenderness. But for whom have I such concern? For that dear lady who hardly thinks of me, or scarce regretteth she makes me wretched.

"But alas! it was in this last dialogue I found my misery complete; for you must know, the lady had listened with some attention—mercy was in her looks, softness in her words, and gentleness in all her air: 'Were this all true,' she asked, 'what could you expect? what do you think your due?'

"Never was poor mortal so dismayed. Though she was absent, I had not the courage to make one imaginary request: had she been present, I could only have expressed my wishes in a trembling look. Oh, wretched prodigality, where one gives all, and dare demand no return! Oh, unfortunate avarice, which covets all, and can merit nothing! Oh, cruel ambition, which can be satisfied with nothing less but what no man can deserve!

"It was long before I could recover from the terror and amaze into which I had thrown myself. At last I ventured to make this answer: 'If what I may pretend to be less than love, surely it is something more than common friendship.'"*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH

"I do not know whether your lordship expects I should answer every letter you write in exact time and form, in order to provoke you to write another: if you do, I fancy your last was an artifice to draw me in to declare my sentiments on the subject of love first, which I think a little unfair—for the most that is expected from a woman is to be upon the defensive. Suppose I should declare my sentiments first; your lordship, who has been so conversant with our sex, might very civilly imagine that I hated contradiction; you might be biassed to think my notions pretty enough for a woman; and your complaisance might draw you in unawares to flatter my understanding, by agreeing to everything I said. What should I get by all this? only the pleasure of hearing myself talk: and I fancy the women that have all their lives been treated in this well-bred manner have that pleasure wholly confined to their own dear selves; and I look upon this as the reason why women generally talk more than men: they are seldomer contradicted, and, consequently, they think themselves oftener in the right. Not that I would have your lordship imagine that I love contradiction, in order to support a dispute: no, the conversation that pleases me is when a person (if such a person can be found) will think freely before me, and speak what he thinks; rather than the common way of playing off sentiments, to show what can be said, and not what he himself thinks right.

"I grant, my lord, we can expect this sort of treatment from none but friends and lovers, and none but friends and lovers deserve it; but he that is sincere is never upon his guard, and cannot do otherwise."†

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 40. † Add. MSS. 22625, f. 42.

THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Love is the general word—but upon many occasions very improperly used; for passions very different, if not opposite, go under the same title.

"I have found love in so many disguises and false appearances in others, and even in myself, that I thought the true passion undiscoverable, and impossible to be described; but what I pretend to represent I have so perfectly felt, that methinks I should be the better able to express it.

"The beginnings of this passion, whether true or false, are pleasing; but if true, the progress is through mountains and rocks: the unhappy traveller goes through rugged ways, and, what is most cruel, he is walking in the dark, on the edge of precipices, he labours under a thousand difficulties:—success must cost him dear, and then, alas! the acquisition is insecure.

"The greatest hardship is this: we seem bound to the same port; we sail in treacherous seas in quest of a woman's heart, but without a compass; there is no beaten path, or common road; as many objects, so many humours; what prevails with one may displease the other, in this fantastic pilgrimage of love: he that goes out of the way may soonest arrive at his journey's end; and the bold have better success than the faithful, the fool than the wise.

"But I have undertaken to define this passion, which I allow to be called love. It is not the person who could please me most, but her that I am most desirous to please, who is truly adored.

"To judge of this, let us consider the character of a beauteous female rake. This creature seems designed to give a man pleasure, and pleasure without pain, though not qualified to give him love: access is easy, enjoyment sure. Free from restraint or obligations, not fettered with the chains of pretended constancy; you meet with satisfaction, and you part with ease; you are warm enough for pleasure, not exposed to the rage of jealousy, and safe from the cold of despair. A true epicure (but not a lover) should content himself with this: and this may be agreed to be the *pleasure-giving* lady.

"This is no unlively picture of a damsel who might please, but far from that person to whom we resign a heart in the delicate way of love. How shall I describe the Amoret capable of inspiring a true respectful tenderness? who so fills the soul with herself, that she leaves room for no other ideas but those of endeavouring to serve and please her? Self-interest, self-satisfaction, are too natural, too powerful, to be quite de-

stroyed; but they are in a manner laid asleep, when at the same time we respect and fear what we love. A kind of awe has the effect of opium; as our pains, so our passions are not overcome, but moderated; and we are brought to compound, not for what we desire, but what she is willing to give.

"I must always more or less endeavour to maintain by proof what I assert. My satisfaction ceases when I am condemned by my own maxims to end this letter; but I am not at liberty to pursue a pleasure that may give you too much trouble at a time. I begin my next with telling you what Amoret should be, or what I think she is."*

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Earl of Peterborough

"One would imagine, by observing upon the world, that every man thought it necessary to be in love—just as he does to talk—to show his superiority to a brute: but such pretenders have only convinced us, that they want that quality they would be thought to have.

"How few are there born with souls capable of friendship! then how much fewer must there be capable of love; for love includes friendship, and much more besides! That you might mistake love in others, I grant you; but I wonder how you could mistake it in yourself. I should have thought, if anybody else had said so, he had never been in love.

"Those rocks and precipices, and those mighty difficulties which you say are to be undergone in the progress of love, can only be meant in the pursuit of a coquette, or where there is no hope of a return; or perhaps you may suppose all women incapable of being touched with so delicate a passion.

"In the voyage of love, you complain of great hardships, narrow seas, and no compass. You still think all women coquettes. He that can use art to subdue a woman is not in love; for how can you suppose a man capable of acting by reason who has not one of his senses under command? Do you think a lover sees or hears his mistress like standers-by? Whatever her looks may be, or however she talks, he sees nothing but roses and lilies, and hears only an angel.

"Your female rake, or pleasure-giving lady, that can leave without regret, that cannot give jealousy, and does not pretend to constancy, I should think a very undesirable thing. I always imagined that these kind of ladies thought it necessary at least to feign love, to make themselves agreeable; and that the best dissemblers were the most admired. Every one that loves thinks his own mistress an Amoret; and, therefore, ask any

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 52.

lover who and what Amoret is, he will describe his own mistress as she appears to himself; but the common practice of men of gallantry is, to make an Amoret of every lady they write to. And, my lord, after you have summed up all the fine qualities that are necessary to make an Amoret, I am under some apprehensions you will conclude with a compliment, by saying I am she."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH

"You lay down rules and prescribe laws for the behaviour of lovers, as if you believed they had the use of their reason, and their thoughts and actions in their own power. The person who can observe laws and rules I absolutely deny to be in love: therefore all rules for the conduct of lovers may be of service to the men of gallantry, but never to real and true lovers.

"The civilities of the Spanish ladies are like those of shopkeepers, to encourage a multitude of customers. Who is so obliging to her lovers as a coquette? She can express her civilities with the utmost ease and freedom to everybody alike; while the person that loves entirely neglects, and forgets everybody for the sake of one. And when I consider how vanity interprets civility, and look over the list of fine gentlemen, I wonder any woman is commonly civil. Not that a woman can lose her character by anything they say, but methinks one would not indulge a fool in his follies.

"I find your lordship thinks it very reasonable that all women should protect themselves against impertinence; I think your lordship should have said, that the women who do not love impertinence should protect themselves against it; for I imagine that a woman who encourages a multitude of lovers either does not know what impertinence is, or has a relish for it.

"To a woman that loves, every man is impertinent who declares his passion, except the man she loves.

"I do not like your lordship's comparison of love and gaming: there again you talk of skill, and of the best players losing, instead of being sharpers. Lovers are *bubbles* to each other; and if ever they endeavour to impose upon one another, the cheat is impracticable, for their eyes turn informers.

"What your lordship observes upon the difficulty of explaining a real passion is, I think, very natural; for the most sanguine lover can never expect that a woman's words should own as much as her eyes: then who would choose to perplex her hopes for the curiosity of asking again what was, with greater

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 54.

certainty, granted him before? If a man can believe any appearances of a woman, he can believe her eyes. That caution, that awe, that reserved respect, that fear of offence, are the strongest declarations of love. I think a woman has reason to suspect a person that has it in his power abruptly to declare his passion. Love discloses itself without design, and by some imperceptible degree, that I believe it is generally very difficult to determine which of the lovers made the first declaration."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH

"I fancy you must think me very unlike a woman, to have the power to contain myself so long as to be spoken to twice without a reply—I mean, to have received two of your letters without returning an answer; by which you will find that a woman's pen is not so ready as her tongue; for most women speak before they think, and I find it necessary to think before I write.

"If you will allow a woman ever to think, I must beg your lordship to give me leave to tell you what I think of your letters.

"In the first place, I cannot think myself so terrible as you seem to represent me, nor can I imagine you to have so little courage as you pretend. You express yourself with so much spirit and gallantry, that I fancy you cannot feel all that concern and fear in the terror of my countenance; for, supposing I was armed with all the wit your generosity gives me, you must allow me to be sensible your lordship is never unarmed. I know that, could you flatter me into a belief that I had a great deal of wit, it would only be a proof to you that I had very little—the common effect of man's flattery and woman's credulity.

"I think, my lord (if you will take the opinion of a female physician), that you are not in such a dying condition as your spleen represents you, when, by all your thoughts and expressions, your mind seems to be so much alive. I think every man is in the wrong who talks to a woman of dying for her; for the only women that can have received a protestation are the widows.

"You talk of flying from dangers: I cannot think your lordship would fly from an imaginary one, who have stood so many real ones. I would not have you call it a flight, but rather a retreat; for, by your past conduct (if you will give me leave to make use of a *double entendre*), I suppose you will rally again."†

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 60. † Add. MSS. 22625, f. 60.

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Earl of Peterborough

"I have been extremely ill ever since I received your lordship's last letter, which has prevented me from answering it sooner.

"Your lordship is at last in the right; for certainly the most agreeable compliment to a woman is to persuade her she is a very fine woman. No reasonable woman desires more, and we all know no reasonable man desires she should be anything else; and therefore let us leave the goddesses and angels to enjoy their heaven in quiet; for since none of our present lovers can bring creditable witnesses that they ever saw a goddess or an angel, how can they tell but the comparison may do their ladies an injustice?

"Your song does the very thing which all along I have been endeavouring to expose—which is, the ridiculous cant of love. A person that is in real distress expresses his wants and desires naturally: similes and studied expressions savour more of affectation than of real passion.

"I fancy the man who first treated the ladies with that celestial complaisance used it in contempt of their understandings. It pleases a little miss to be called a queen: and I think the woman must be still a little miss in her way of thinking, who can be taken with being called a goddess or an angel.

"Your lordship going into warmer climates to pay adoration to the sun is something of the same strain. But I will make no more objections; for I would not endeavour to dissuade you from a sort of eloquence which you must have experienced to be the most powerful to engage the hearts of women.

"In the preliminaries of our correspondence we were to declare our thoughts with freedom: but all this time I have forgot that I am labouring to advise a person in matters which he must know much better than myself; for I am very certain that no person whatever understands a woman so little as a woman."*

If further proof than is contained in the letters were wanting that Peterborough was prompted in their composition only by a spirit of gallantry, it is to be found in the fact that he, who had been a widower since 1709, had for some time been attracted by, and in 1722 married, Anastasia, the daughter of the portrait-painter Thomas Robinson, and herself a singer at the King's

* *Ibid.* f. 82.

Theatre, with a salary of £1,000 a year, whose praises have been sung by Gay :

> " *O soothe me with some soft Italian air,*
> *Let harmony compose my tortured ear !*
> *When Anastasia's voice commands the strain,*
> *The melting warble thrills through every vein ;*
> *Thought stands suspended, silence pleased attends,*
> *While in her notes the heav'nly choir descends.*"*

Besides the parties immediately concerned, only Lady Harley† was present at the ceremony ; and she, and presently her daughter,‡ became great friends of Lady Peterborough, who included among her intimates Arbuthnot and, later on, Mrs. Delany§. The marriage, however, was kept a profound secret, for the bridegroom could not bring himself publicly to proclaim his *mésalliance*. None the less, he was devoted to his wife, and looked after her carefully. When she complained that Senesino, the operatic tenor, had been insolent to her, his rage knew no bounds, and, for all his sixty-five years, he caned him publicly, and compelled him to ask her pardon on his knees. Further, when Lord Stanhope showed an inclination to take the man's part, he challenged him to a duel, and a meeting was only prevented by the intervention of the civil power. The affair made a great stir in polite circles. " Would anyone believe that Mrs. Robinson is, at the same time, a prude and a kept mistress ? " Lady Mary Wortley Montagu commented with spiteful humour upon the incident in a letter to her sister, Lady Mar, February, 1724. " She has engaged half the town in arms, from the nicety of her virtue, which was not able to bear the too near approach of Senesino in the opera ; and her condescension

* *Epistle to William Pulteney.*

† Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles (d. 1755), the daughter and heiress of John, Duke of Newcastle, married in 1713 Edward Harley, who succeeded his father in 1724 as (second) Earl of Oxford (1689–1741).

‡ Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley (1715–1785), Prior's " noble, lovely little Peggy," who married in 1734 William Bentinck, second Duke of Portland.

§ Mary Granville (1700-1788), married (1) in 1718 Alexander Pendarves, and (2) in 1743 Patrick Delany (see p. 199). She was a friend of Swift and Fanny Burney. Her Autobiography was published in 1861-1862.

in her accepting of Lord Peterborough for a champion, who has signalised both his love and courage upon this occasion in as many instances as ever Don Quixote did for Dulcinea. Poor Senesino, like a vanquished giant, was forced to confess upon his knees that Anastasia was a nonpareil of virtue and beauty. Lord Stanhope, as dwarf to the said giant, joked about his size, and was challenged for his pains. Lord de la Ware* was Lord Peterborough's second; my Lady miscarried and the whole town divided into parties on this important point. Innumerable have been the disorders between the two sexes on so great an account, besides half the House of Peers being put under arrest. By the providence of Heaven, and the wise cares of his Majesty, no bloodshed ensued. However, things are now tolerably accommodated, and the fair lady rides through the town in triumph, in the shining berlin of her hero, not to reckon the more solid advantage of £100 a month, which 'tis said he allows her."†

Mrs. Robinson (as she was still called) retired from the stage in 1724, and, with her half-sister, Margaret, took up her residence at her husband's villa at Parson's Green, then in the country, but now a suburb of London. After Margaret Robinson's marriage to Dr. Arbuthnot's youngest brother, George, which took place in 1728, she joined her husband at Bevis Mount, his small cottage overlooking Itchin Ferry and Southampton Water—a place "beautiful beyond imagination,"‡ Pope described it. From here he wrote in October, 1730, to Mrs. Howard, and from the change in the tone of this from his earlier letters, it is apparent that the fact he was now an old man had been forcibly thrust upon him.

"I return you a thousand thanks for what you were pleased to send me; the prevailing remedy will be your charitable wish. I dare not but recover, if you command me to do so; for in what dare I disobey?

"It is certain you or none must have the credit of my recovery.

* John West, seventh Earl de la Ware (1693–1766); Lieutenant-Colonel in the Guards, 1717; Treasurer of the Household, 1731–1736; an active politician; created Earl, 1761.

† *Letters* (ed. Thomas), I. 352.

‡ Pope to Mrs. Knight, August 5, 1734.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

[*To face p.* 100.

The doctors have told me mine is an inward pain; if so, I can have no cure from any other person.

"You blame me for seeking no remedies, and yet you know vain attempts of any kind are ridiculous. I have some time since made a bargain with fate to submit with patience to all her freaks; some accidents have given me a great contempt, almost a distaste of life. Shakspeare shall tell you my opinion of it:

> "*Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,*
> *Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man—*
>
> "*Life is a walking shadow—a poor player,*
> *That frets and struts his hour upon the stage,*
> *And then is seen no more.*

"Do not wonder then, Mrs. Howard, if the world is become so indifferent to me, that I can even amuse myself with the thoughts of going out of it. I was writing some days ago a dialogue betwixt me and one that is departed before me; one that would have kept his promise to you, if possible: when the case falls out, Mr. Pope shall give it you.

"If we meet and hold conference in the shades below, much will be said of you. How rivals quarrel or agree in those places, I know not; but I own I am jealous to a great degree. It is too much to know what ladies think in this world; I wish we could be informed of your true thoughts of us in the other.

"So near the birth-day we must think of less melancholy subjects. Will you be pleased to let me know what you have chosen for Mrs. Mordaunt, and the shop where it is bespoke? and give me leave to add, that the Elysian fields in this world are our own."*

At Bevis Mount, though still unacknowledged, his wife, as a concession to her scruples, was allowed to wear a wedding-ring; but before undergoing an operation for stone in the spring of 1735, he made tardy reparation, and at a family gathering in the apartments at St. James's Palace of his nephew, Stephen Poyntz,† he introduced her as his wife. Shortly after, he again went through the ceremony of marriage with her. "He [Lord

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 115.

† The Hon. Stephen Poyntz (1685–1750), diplomatist, Governor and Steward of the Household to William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. He married in 1733 Anna Maria Mordaunt, daughter of Brigadier-General the Hon. Lewis Mordaunt, who had been a maid-of-honour to Queen Caroline.

Peterborough] told me," Pope wrote from Bevis Mount to Martha Blount, August 25, 1735, "that he had ended his domestic affairs through such difficulties from the law that gave him as much torment of mind as his distemper had done of body, to do right to the person to whom he had obligation beyond measure. That he had found it necessary not only to declare his marriage to all his relations, but (since the parson who married them was dead) to remarry her in the church at Bristol, before witnesses." In July, when he had invited Pope to Bevis Mount, he had also written to Mrs. Howard (now Lady Suffolk)—it was his last letter to her—begging her to come and meet the poet—an invitation which could not be accepted as the recipient was engaged to go on a visit to Stowe. He was then nearing the end of his life, and, as the letter shows, was aware of it.

"I return you a thousand thanks for your obliging enquiry after my health. I struggle on with doubtful success: one of my strongest motives to do so is, the hopes of seeing you at my cottage before I die, when you either go to the Bath or to Mrs. Herbert's.

"In my most uneasy moments, I find amusement in a book, which I therefore send you; it is one of the most interesting I ever read. I had gathered to myself some notions of the character from pieces of history written in both extremes, but I never expected so agreeable and so fair an account from a priest. In one quarter of an hour we love and hate the same person without inconstancy. One moment the emperor is in possession of our whole heart, and the philosopher fully possessed of our soul; within four or five pages we blush for our hero, and are ashamed of our philosopher.

"What courage, what presence of mind in danger! the first and bravest man in a Roman army; sharing with every soldier the fatigue and danger! The same animal hunting after fortune-tellers, gazing upon the flight of birds, looking into the entrails of beasts with vain curiosity; seeking for cunning women (as we call them) and silly man to give him an account of his destiny, and, if it can be believed, consenting to the highest inhumanities in pursuit of magical experiments.

"Yet, when we come to the last scene, the most prejudiced heart must be softened. With what majesty does the emperor meet his fate! showing how a soldier, how a philosopher, how a friend of Lady Suffolk's ought (only with juster notions of the Deity) to die.

"The lady, the book, or both together, have brought me almost into a raving way; I want to make an appointment with you, Mr. Pope, and a few friends more, to meet upon the summit of my Bevis hill, and thence, after a speech and a tender farewell, I shall take my leap towards the clouds (as Julian expresses it), to mix amongst the stars; but I make my bargain for a very fine day, that you may see my last amusement to advantage."

Not long after Lord Peterborough, accompanied by his wife, went to the south of France, thence to Lisbon, where he died on October 25, 1735, six days after his arrival. He left some memoirs, but these so shocked Lady Peterborough that with her own hands she burnt the manuscript.

CHAPTER VII

MARBLE HILL, TWICKENHAM

Mrs. Howard purchases Marble Hill in 1723—Lord Pembroke furnishes the design for the house—Lord Burlington superintends the decorations—Pope and Lord Bathurst lay out the grounds—Arbuthnot and Gay organize the household—Swift takes charge of the wine-cellars—The building finished in 1725—Mrs. Howard acquires some adjacent lands—She subsequently purchases Riverside Cottage—Her expenditure of time and money—Swift's lines on Marble Hill—Twickenham fashionable in the eighteenth century—Mrs. Howard's neighbours—Thomas Vernon—Lord Mountrath—Lord Islay—Lord Strafford—Lady Anne Conolly—Lady Torrington—Richard Owen Cambridge—Dowager Countess of Ferrers—Lady Fanny Shirley—Her intimacy with Lord Chesterfield—Lord Radnor—Sir Chaloner Ogle—Nicholas Amhurst—Thomas Hudson—Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—James Johnston—His career—His favour with Queen Caroline—The *fête* at Orleans House—Pope at Twickenham—A frequent visitor at Marble Hill—A humorous letter from him to Mrs. Howard—His affection for her—His verses "To a certain Lady at Court."

THE exact date when Mrs. Howard acquired Marble Hill, Twickenham, situated between Richmond Bridge and Orleans House, has not been definitely agreed. It is usually given as 1724, but it is clear that she was in possession of the small estate somewhat earlier, for in a letter written from Richmond Lodge to John Gay, July 5, 1723, she says, "I beg you will never mention the plan which you found in my room. There is a necessity to keep the whole affair secret, though (I think I may tell you) it is almost entirely finished to my satisfaction." The reason why the project was not to be mentioned is clearly because Lord Islay, who acted for Mrs. Howard, had not yet settled everything with the proprietors, John Grey, Robert Parsons, and Thomas Vernon. The arrangements differed in each case, and in all were complicated: though the greatest care was taken, there was trouble presently concerning a lot of two acres held under a charity by Vernon, who assigned the lease

to Lord Islay, but whose widow subsequently claimed certain rights.*

Mrs. Howard's friends now gathered round her, and demanded the privilege of being allowed to assist in the development of her property. Lord Pembroke,† no mean architect, who had drawn up the plans for Richmond Lodge, charged himself with the design of Marble Hill. "His intention," Cobbett has written, "was evidently to make the rooms on the first floor of most imposing proportions, and to effect this the height of the lower and upper stories has been somewhat unduly sacrificed. The staircase is made entirely of finely-carved mahogany, and some of the floors are of the same wood. It is said that the unceremonious way in which one of the King's naval officers felled the trees required for this purpose in the Bay of Honduras without permission of the Court of Spain very nearly caused a war. The interior of the house is plain in the extreme; its front faces the north."‡ Lord Burlington§ superintended the decorations of the house, and Pope and Lord Bathurst laid out the grounds. Arbuthnot and Gay organized the household, and, at a later date, Swift named himself custodian of the wine-cellars.

All Mrs. Howard's circle was greatly interested in the building, and its progress may be traced in their correspondence. "How does my good Howard do?" Mrs. Campbell wrote to her, August 29, 1724. "Methinks I long to hear from you; but I suppose you are up to the ears in bricks and mortar, and talk of frieze and cornice like any little woman! I am going in a few days to Colonel Fane's, where I intend to improve myself in the terms of art, in order to keep pace with you in the winter; otherwise I know I shall make but a scurvy figure in your room."‖ "Marble Hill wants only for its roof—the rest is finished," Pope

* See Pope's letter to Mrs. Howard, May, 1729 (*Works*, ed. Elwin and Courthope, IX. 468).

† Thomas Herbert, eighth Earl of Pembroke (1656-1733), the father of Lord Herbert (see p. 36), who was also a friend of Mrs. Howard.

‡ *Twickenham*, 241.

§ Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington (1695–1753), who rebuilt Burlington House, Piccadilly; the friend of Gay and Pope.

‖ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 93.

wrote to William Fortescue,* September 17. "My gardens improve more than my writings; my head is still more upon Mrs. H[owar]d and her works, than upon my own."† "I shall certainly visit both you and Marble Hill," Lady Hervey wrote from Bath, July 30, 1725, "for I long extremely to see what I am told is the prettiest thing of the size that can be seen."‡

Marble Hill as originally planned was finished at latest in the summer of 1725, but Mrs. Howard, though delighted with her new possession, could not be happy until she had added to it. Again, everyone was anxious that her wishes should be satisfied; even Walpole, who opposed her in most things, supported her in this. "Mr. Walpole swore by God, Mrs. Howard should have the grounds she wanted from V[ernon]," Pope wrote to Fortescue, September 25, 1725. "Nothing would be more extraordinary, except that a statesman make good his promise or oath, as very probably he will."§ Whether through the intercession of the Minister or not, Mrs. Howard acquired more land in 1727. In 1750 she further purchased the cottage, Riverside, next to Orleans House.‖ She lavished much care and large sums of money on Marble Hill, indeed, she spent so much on it that at one time it seemed likely that she might have to sell it to save herself from ruin—a point upon which Swift dwelt in "A Pastoral Dialogue" (1727):

> *"My house was built but for a show,*
> *My Lady's empty pockets know;*
> *And now she will not have a shilling*
> *To raise the stairs, or build the ceiling;*
> *For all the courtly madams round*
> *Now pay four shillings in the pound;*
> *'Tis come to what I always thought:*
> *My dame is hardly worth a groat.*
> . . . . .

* William Fortescue (1687–1749), barrister, a Baron of the Exchequer, 1736; a Justice of Common Pleas, 1738; Master of the Rolls, 1741; an intimate friend of Gay, Pope, Mrs. Howard, and their circle.

† Pope: *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 102.

‡ Add. MSS. 22628, f. 15.

§ Pope: *Works*, IX. 105.
Cobbett: *Twickenham*, 248.

" No more the Dean, that grave divine,
Shall keep the key of my no —— wine ;
My ice-house rob, as heretofore,
And steal my artichokes no more ;
Poor Patty Blount no more be seen
Bedraggled in my walks so green :
Plump Johnny Gay will now elope ;
And here no more will dangle Pope.

. . . . .

" Some South Sea broker from the City
Will purchase me, the more's the pity ;
Lay all my fine plantations waste,
To fit them to his vulgar taste."

Twickenham was then a pleasant little place, and popular owing to its proximity to Hampton Court and Richmond Lodge. The great man of the neighbourhood in the earlier decades of the eighteenth century was Thomas Vernon, the owner of Twickenham Park. It was upon land purchased from him that Pope's Villa and Marble Hill were built. Vernon is said to have been in his youth a Turkey merchant : he is known to have been for a while secretary to the Duke of Monmouth,* and to have sat in the Tory interest for Whitechurch from 1710 until May, 1721, when he was expelled for endeavouring to bribe some brother-members to vote in favour of his brother-in-law Aislabie,† who was charged with fraud in connection with the South Sea scheme. He was, however, returned for the borough in 1722, and he represented it until his death four years later. From Vernon's widow, Twickenham Park was acquired by Lord Mountrath,‡ whose widow resided there until her death in 1766, twenty-two years after her husband had passed away. Mrs.

* James Scott, Duke of Monmouth (1649–1685), son of Charles II. by Lucy Walters.

† John Aislabie (1670–1742), Treasurer of the Navy, 1714–1718 ; Chancellor of the Exchequer 1718–1721. He was expelled from the House of Commons in the latter year for his share in the South Sea Company's fraud.

‡ Algernon Coote, sixth Earl of Mountrath (d. 1744). He married Diana, daughter of Richard Newport, second Earl of Bradford.

Howard's friend, Lord Islay, lived at Whitten Place; and another of her circle, Lord Strafford* at Mount Lebanon, which, after his death in 1739, passed into the hands of his daughter, Lady Anne Conolly.† At Richmond House lived the widowed Lady Torrington, and after 1744 Francis, the son of Sir Anthony Kirk, a Commissioner of the Great Seal after the Revolution. The Dowager Countess of Ferrers‡ resided at Heath Lane Lodge, and with her lived Lady Fanny Shirley, beloved by Lord Chesterfield, whose attentions to her began shortly after his marriage in 1733, and continued for many years. She was the heroine of his song, "When Fanny, blooming fair;" and their relations were commented upon by Hanbury Williams in his poem, "Morning":

> *"Says Lovell—'There were Chesterfield and Fanny,*
> *In that eternal whisper which began*
> *Ten years ago, and never will be done*
> *For though, you know, he sees her every day,*
> *Still he has ever something new to say;*
> *He never lets the conversation fall,*
> *And I'm sure Fanny can't keep up the ball;*
> *I saw that her replies were never long,*
> *And with her eyes she answered for her tongue.'"*

In the neighbourhood lived Lord Radnor,§ Sir Chaloner Ogle,‖ Nicholas Amhurst,¶ Thomas Hudson,** and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The mansion now known as Orleans House

* Thomas Wentworth (1672–1739), diplomatist, succeeded as Baron Raby, 1695. The earldom of Strafford was revived in his person, 1711.

† Lady Anne, eldest daughter of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, married in 1733 William Conolly, nephew of William Conolly, speaker of the Irish House of Commons. He was M.P. for Ballyshannon from 1727 until his death in 1753.

‡ Mary, daughter of Sir Richard Levinge, Bart., a Judge of the King's Bench in Ireland, married Washington Shirley, second Earl Ferrers (d. 1729).

§ John Robartes, fourth and last Earl of Radnor (1686–1757).

‖ Sir Chaloner Ogle (1681?-1750), Admiral of the Fleet.

¶ Nicholas Amhurst (1697–1742), political writer, editor of the *Craftsman*, to which Lord Bolingbroke and William Pulteney contributed.

** Thomas Hudson (1701–1779), portrait painter; and for two years Reynolds's master. He painted portraits of George II. and Handel.

was occupied by James Johnston, a younger son of Archibald, Lord Warriston, who built it in 1702, after the model of country seats in Lombardy. Having been taken abroad after the execution of his father for high treason in 1663, he did not return to England upon the Revolution, in the promotion of which he had taken an active part. In 1690 he was appointed joint-Secretary for Scotland with Dalrymple ;* and, two years later, his credit at Court was greatly enhanced by his securing early intelligence of the projected invasion of the kingdom by La Hogue. Shortly after this, however, he fell into disgrace for promoting in the Scottish Parliament a Bill for establishing the Africa Company. When Anne ascended the throne he was appointed Lord Register of Scotland, but he only held the post for a year. He paid more than one visit to Hanover when George Lewis was Elector, and later he was highly regarded by George II. and his consort. When Caroline was at Hampton Court she frequently came down the river to breakfast in the beautiful gardens with Lady Catherine Johnston ; and it was for the *fête* at which she was present on August 13, 1729, that Johnston built the large octagonal room at the end of the house. After Johnston's death in 1737, the property was purchased by George Morton Pitt, a former Governor of Fort St. George.

The most notable resident at Twickenham was, of course, Pope, who had in 1719 invested in the purchase of an estate on the river-side the money he had derived from the translation of the " Iliad." As has been said, he planned the gardens at Marble Hill ; and, when Mrs. Howard was at Court, looked after her affairs there. He was a frequent visitor, and very much at home at her house.

ALEXANDER POPE TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD.

" June 20 [1726].

" We cannot omit taking this occasion to congratulate you upon the increase of your family, for your cow is this morning very happily delivered of the better sort, I mean a female calf ; she is as like her mother as she can stare. All knights errants' palfreys were distinguished by lofty names ; we see no reason why a pastoral lady's sheep and calves should want names of

* Sir John Dalrymple (1648–1707), knighted 1667 ; succeeded as (second) Viscount Stair, 1695 ; created Earl of Stair, 1707.

the softer sounds: we have, therefore, given her the name of Caesar's wife, Calpurnia: imagining, that as Romulus and Remus were suckled by a wolf, this Roman lady was suckled by a cow, from whence she took that name.

"In order to celebrate this birthday, we had a cold dinner at Marble Hill. Mrs. Susan offered us wine upon the occasion, and upon such an occasion we could not refuse it. Our entertainment consisted of flesh and fish, and the lettuce of a Greek island called Cos. We have some thoughts of dining there tomorrow, to celebrate the day after the birthday, and on Friday to celebrate the day after that, where we intend to entertain Dean Swift; because we think your hall the most delightful room in the world, except that where you are. If it was not for you, we would forswear all Courts; and really it is the most mortifying thing in nature, that we can neither get into the Court to live with you, nor you get into the country to live with us; so we will take up with what we can get that belongs to you, and make ourselves as happy as we can in your house.

"I hope we shall be brought into no worse company when you all come to Richmond: for whatever our friend Gay may wish as to getting into Court, I disclaim it, and desire to see nothing of the Court but yourself."

Pope was genuinely fond of Mrs. Howard, and, unlike many of her friends, had no use for her influence at Court, for, as he declared, and declared with truth, he wanted for nothing that either royalty or the Government could give him. As Swift wrote:

"Plain loyalty, not built on hope,
I leave to your contriver, Pope;
None loves his King and country better,
*Yet none was ever less their debtor."**

Pope was not blind to Mrs. Howard's faults, but he was very wide awake to her virtues, which he celebrated in the well-known verses, "To a certain Lady at Court":

"I know a thing that's most uncommon
(Envy, be silent, and attend!);
I know a reasonable woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.

* *A Pastoral Dialogue.*

ALEXANDER POPE.
After the portrait by William Hoare.

[*To face p.* 115.

"Nor warp'd by passion, aw'd by rumour,
Not grave thro' pride, or gay through folly,
An equal mixture of good humour,
And sensible soft melancholy.

"'Has she no faults then (Envy says), Sir?'
Yes, she has one, I must aver;
When all the world conspires to praise her,
The woman's deaf, and does not hear."

CHAPTER VIII

"THE SWISS CANTONS"

I.—DR. ARBUTHNOT, JOHN GAY, LORD CHESTERFIELD

Dr. Arbuthnot—The Scriblerus Club—Swift's affection for Arbuthnot—A friend of the wits—John Gay—In search of a "place"—A delightful, whimsical, lovable creature—Beloved by all—"The Present State of Wit"—Other early compositions—Secretary to Lord Clarendon—His petition to Lord Oxford—At Hanover—"A Letter to a Lady"—Pope records that "Gay is well at Court"—Gay and Mrs. Howard—Their correspondence—"Poems on Several Occasions"—Gay and the South Sea Bubble—His numerous friends—The Duchess of Queensberry—Paul Methuen—William Pulteney—Lord Burlington—At Tunbridge Wells—His "Fables"—His hopes of a sinecure—Lord Chesterfield an intimate of Mrs. Howard—Their playful correspondence—His "Character" of her—He is appointed Ambassador at The Hague—His letters to Mrs. Howard from there—Lord Finch and Lady Fanny Feilding—His quarrel with Walpole—He is dismissed from his offices—His breach with the Court—He marries Lady Walsingham—He goes to law with the King—Queen Caroline, Mrs. Howard, and Walpole.

WHEN Mrs. Howard returned to England in the train of the Princess of Wales, one of the first people with whom she struck up an intimacy was Dr. Arbuthnot. He had been physician to Queen Anne, whom he had attended in her last illness, and had had apartments at St. James's, where the Scriblerus Club assembled. He was such a lovable person that Swift, who was of all persons the least given to indiscriminate eulogy, wrote to Pope: "If there were a dozen Arbuthnots in the world I would burn my [Gulliver's] Travels." Arbuthnot's appointment as royal physician was not renewed by George I., but his private practice still remained as considerable as in the days when he was in favour at Court. The wits still gathered round him. He numbered among his friends, besides Swift, Lord Chesterfield and William Pulteney; and with Pope and Gay he collaborated in that sorry farce, *Three Hours after*

Marriage, which was not worthy of the talents of any one of these three gifted men. He was greatly attracted to Mrs. Howard, and one by one he introduced his acquaintances to her.

No one was more assiduous in attention to Mrs. Howard than John Gay, who, in one of his verses, says :

*" Now to my heart the glance of Howard flies."**

Unlike his friend Pope, who went his way and asked for nothing, Gay was always on the look out to get something for nothing. It is not improbable that he was first drawn to Mrs. Howard by the belief that she might further his aims, but he soon came to like her for herself, and long after he discovered that she could be of no service to him he remained a very warm and loyal friend. Until he was forty-two, Gay's life was governed by the hope that a " place," with a handsome salary, might be found for him ; and with this object always before him he haunted the Court during a period of thirteen years—when he, perforce, baffled, but not greatly embittered, abandoned the quest. He was a delightful, whimsical, helpless creature who leant upon all who were stronger, and each one upon whom he leant loved him. Though he persistently regarded himself as neglected by the gods, and endeavoured to make his many friends share this view, it is nevertheless a fact that the fates were unusually kind to this feckless poet. A Minister made him a present of South Sea stock ; for his sake, the greatest man of letters of the day quarrelled with Mrs. Howard, a Duchess insulted the King and left the Court, a Duke threw up his employments under Government, and all his friends placed their purses and their houses at his disposal, and competed for the pleasure of his company.

Of humble origin, and for a while apprentice to a London silk-mercer, literature early claimed Gay for its own, and his pamphlet on " The Present State of Wit," published in 1711, when he was twenty-six, attracted the attention of Swift, and brought about his meeting with Pope. He then became secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth ;† and during the short

* *Pope's Welcome from Greece.*

† Anne Scott, Duchess of Buccleuch in her own right, married in 1663 James Scott, Duke of Monmouth (see p. 107). The Duke was executed in 1685, and three years later his widow married Charles, third Baron Cornwallis.

period that he held this position he issued "The Fan," produced his comedy *The Wife of Bath*, at Drury Lane, and wrote *The Shepherd's Week*. Having thus established himself as a man of letters, he, after the fashion of that day, began to sigh for employment under Government. What Gay wanted, his friends always endeavoured to secure for him. They interested themselves on his behalf, and he was appointed secretary to Lord Clarendon, who in June, 1714, was preparing to go as Envoy-Extraordinary on a special mission to Hanover to offer to the Elector the condolences of Queen Anne on the death of the Electress Sophia. Gay, however, was so poor that he had not the wherewithal for his equipment. "I am every day attending my Lord Treasurer [Oxford] for his bounty, in order to set me out," he wrote on June 8 to Swift, whose influence had probably been exercised to obtain for him the post; "which he hath promised me upon the following petition, which I sent him by Dr. Arbuthnot:

THE EPIGRAMMATICAL PETITION OF JOHN GAY

"'*I'm no more to converse with the swains,*
But go where fine folk resort;
One can live without money or plains,
But never without it at Court.

"'*If, when with the swains I did gambol,*
I array'd me in silver and blue;
When abroad, and in Courts, I shall ramble,
Pray, my Lord, how much money will do?'"

On the receipt of a hundred pounds from Lord Oxford, Gay felt confident that he was on the high road to fortune. He was convinced of it when at Hanover the Electoral Princess, Caroline, asked for a copy of his poems. When the embassy was recalled on the death of Queen Anne, Gay on his return, remembering the kindly welcome extended to him by the royal lady who was now Princess of Wales, hoped that a place would be found for him in her Household. No offer of this sort being made to him, he, acting on the suggestion of Pope and Arbuthnot, decided to recall himself to her memory, and on November 20 published "A Letter to a Lady, occasioned by the arrival of

Her Royal Highness"—the "Lady" being, it is generally assumed, Mrs. Howard, whose acquaintance he had made abroad. In these verses he gave the assurance that he had desired the elements to arrange for the Princess an agreeable passage to England:

> *"My strains with Carolina's name I grace,*
> *The lovely parent of our royal race.*
> *Breathe soft, ye winds, ye waves in silence sleep;*
> *Let prosp'rous breezes wanton o'er the deep,*
> *Swell the white sails, and with the streamers play,*
> *To waft her gently o'er the wat'ry way."*

With true poetic exaggeration he extolled Caroline's virtues; and then, so that there should be no excuse for misunderstanding, said in plain terms that he had expected a post at Court, and made it clear that he was still prepared to accept such employment, coupled with suitable remuneration:

> *"Since all my schemes were baulk'd, my last resort,*
> *I left the Muses to frequent the Court;*
> *Pensive each night, from room to room I walk'd,*
> *To one I bow'd, and with another talk'd;*
> *Inquir'd what news, or such a lady's name,*
> *And did the next day, and the next, the same.*
> *Places I found, were daily giv'n away,*
> *And yet no friendly 'Gazette' mention'd Gay."*

His protestations of delight at the accession to the throne of the House of Hanover would probably have been regarded as more sincere if, unfortunately, he had not just before dedicated "The Shepherd's Week" to Lord Bolingbroke. His very outspoken hint in the "Letter to a Lady" was ignored, but Caroline, who liked eulogy as much as anyone, received him kindly; and when in February, 1715, he produced *The What D'ye Call It* at Drury Lane, she and her consort attended the first performance. The poet's dreams, indeed, seemed likely of fulfilment. "Gay is well at Court, and more in the way of being served than ever," Pope wrote to Martha Blount, December, 1716. "However, not to trust too much

to hopes, he will have a play* acted in four or five weeks, which we have driven a bargain for . . . Gay dines daily with the Maids of Honour."†

Access to the Court being open to him, Gay's acquaintance with Mrs. Howard ripened into intimacy, and through her he became acquainted with the Maids of Honour, to whom from time to time he paid compliments in his verses. As has been said, Mrs. Howard called him in to assist her in corresponding with Lord Peterborough; and they were on such good terms that when he was away he always kept closely in touch with her.

"Dijon,
"September 8, 1719.

"If it be absolutely necessary that I make an apology for my not writing, I must give you an account of very bad physicians, and a fever which I had at Spa, that confined me for a month, but I do not see that I need make the least excuse, or that I can find any reason for writing to you at all; for can you believe that I would wish to converse with you if it were not for the pleasure to hear you talk again? Then why should I write to you when there is no possibility of receiving an answer? I have been looking everywhere since I came into France to find out some object that might take you from my thoughts, that my journey might seem less tedious; but since nothing could ever do it in England, I can much less expect it in France.

"I am rambling from place to place. In about a month I hope to be at Paris, and in the next month to be in England, and the next minute to see you. I am now at Dijon in Burgundy, where, last night, at an ordinary, I was surprised by a question from an English gentleman, whom I had never seen before; hearing my name, he asked me if I had any relation or acquaintance with *myself*, and when I told him I knew no such person, he assured me that he was an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Gay's at London. There was a Scotch gentleman, who all supper time was teaching some French gentlemen the force and propriety of the English language; and, what is seen very commonly, a young English gentleman with a Jacobite governor. A French marquis drove an Abbé from the table by railing against the vast riches of the Church; and another marquis, who squinted, endeavoured to explain transubstantiation;

* *Three Weeks after Marriage*, written by Gay, Arbuthnot, and Pope, was produced at Drury Lane in January, 1717.

† Pope: *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 271.

'that a thing might not be what it really appeared to be, my eyes,' says he, 'may convince you; I *seem* at present to be looking on you; but, on the contrary, I see quite on the other side of the table.' I do not believe that this argument converted one of the heretics present; for all that I learned by him was, that to believe transubstantiation it is necessary not to see the thing you seem to look at.

"So much I have observed on the conversation and manners of the *people*. As for the *animals* of the country, it abounds with bugs, which are exceeding familiar with strangers; and as for *plants*, garlick seems to be the favourite production of the country, though for my own part, I think the vine preferable to it: when I publish my travels at large, I shall be more particular; in order to which, to-morrow I set out for Lyons, from thence to Montpelier, and so to Paris; and soon after I shall pray that the winds may be favourable, I mean, to bring you from Richmond to London, or me from London to Richmond."*

After his return from the Continent, Gay in 1720 issued his "Poems on Several Occasions," and these were so well subscribed that he made more than £1,000 by the publication; whereupon he wrote:

> "*Yet let me not of grievances complain,*
> *Who (though the meanest of the Muse's train)*
> *Can boast subscriptions to my humble lays,*
> *And mingle profit with my little praise.*"†

In the same year James Craggs the younger gave him some South Sea stock, and Gay invested in this venture his newly-acquired money. Luck was with him, and the value of his holding rose to £20,000. In vain his friends begged him to sell out; in vain they urged him anyhow to realize sufficient to provide himself with a small competence: he suddenly regarded himself as a man of affairs, and decided to manage his own business transactions. The crash came, and he lost, not only his profit, but the greater part of his capital. The blow was

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 22.

† Epistle to *Paul Methuen.*

Paul Methuen (1672–1757), diplomatist; Comptroller of the Household, 1720–1725; K.B., 1725.

severe, but his friends came to his rescue. They procured for him from Walpole in 1722 a Commissionership of Lotteries, a sinecure with a salary of £150 a year, and presently Lord Lincoln gave him a *pied-à-terre* in Whitehall. Gay's intimate circle was large and influential and, for the most part, affluent, and the members of it lapped him in luxury. The Duchess of Queensberry was as a fairy godmother to him; Paul Methuen, of whom he wrote:

> "*First see I Methuen of sincerest mind,*
> *As Arthur grave, as soft as womankind,*"*

was devoted to him; and so was William Pulteney, who in 1717 took him for a ramble on the Continent. Lord Burlington, too, was attached to him, and it was as his guest that the poet visited Tunbridge Wells in 1723.

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO JOHN GAY

"Richmond Lodge,
"July 5, 1723.

"I was very sorry to hear, when I returned from Greenwich, that you had been at Richmond the same day; but I really thought you would have ordered your affairs in such a manner, that I should have seen you before you went to Tunbridge. I dare say you are now with your friends, but not with one who more sincerely wishes to see you easy and happy than I do: if my power was equal to theirs, the matter should soon be determined.

"I am glad to hear you frequent the church; you cannot fail of being often put in mind of the great virtue of patience, and how necessary that may be for you to practise, I leave to your own experience. I applaud your prudence (for I hope it is entirely owing to it), that you have no money at Tunbridge. It is easier to avoid the means of temptation, than to resist them when the power is in our own hands. . . .

"The place you are in has strangely filled your head with cures and physicians; but (take my word for it) many a fine lady has gone there to drink the waters without being sick, and many a man has complained of the loss of his heart, who has had it in his own possession. I desire you will keep yours, for I shall not be very fond of a friend without one, and I have a great mind you should be in the number of mine."†

* *Pope's Welcome from Greece.*

† Add. MSS. 22626, f. 29.

JOHN GAY.
After a portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

[*To face p.* 118.

JOHN GAY TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Tunbridge Wells,

"July 12, 1723.

"The next pleasure to seeing you is hearing from you; and when I hear you succeed in your wishes, I succeed in mine—so I will not say a word more of the house.

"We have a young lady here, Mary Jennings, that is very particular in her desires. I have known some ladies, who, if ever they prayed, and were sure their prayers would prevail, would ask an equipage, a title, a husband, or matadores; but this lady, who is but seventeen, and has but thirty thousand pounds, places all her wishes in a pot of good ale. When her friends, for the sake of her shape and complexion, would dissuade her from it, she answers, with the truest sincerity, that by the loss of shape and complexion she can only lose a husband, but that ale is her passion. I have not as yet drank with her, though I must own I cannot help being fond of a lady who has so little disguise of her practice, either in her words or appearance. If to show you love her, you must drink with her, she has chosen an ill place for followers, for she is forbid with the waters. Her shape is not very unlike a barrel; and I would describe her eyes, if I could look over the agreeable swellings of her cheeks, in which the rose predominates; nor can I perceive the least of the lily in her whole countenance. You see what £30,000 can do, for without that I could never have discovered all these agreeable particularities: in short, she is the *ortolan*, or rather *wheat-ear*, of the place, for she is entirely a lump of fat; and the form of the universe itself is scarce more beautiful, for her figure is almost circular. After I have said all this, I believe it will be in vain for me to declare I am not in love; and I am afraid that I have showed some imprudence in talking upon this subject, since you have declared that you like a friend that has a heart in his disposal. I assure you I am not mercenary, and that £30,000 have not half so much power with me as the woman I love."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO JOHN GAY

"Richmond Lodge,

"July 22, 1723.

"I have taken some days to consider of your *wheat-ear*, but I find I can no more approve of your having a passion for that, than I did of your turning parson. But if ever you will take the one, I insist upon your taking the other: they ought not to be

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 30.

parted; they were made from the beginning for each other. But I do not forbid you to get the best intelligence of the ways, manners and customs, of this wonderful *phénomène:* how it supports the disappointment of bad ale, and what are the consequences to the full enjoyment of her luxury? I have some thoughts of taking a hint from the ladies of your acquaintance, who pray for matadores, and turn devotees for luck at ombre; for I have already lost above £100 since I came to Richmond.

"I do not like to have you too passionately fond of everything that has no disguise. I (that am grown old in courts) can assure you, sincerity is so very unthriving, that I can never give consent that you should practise it, excepting to three or four people that I think may deserve it, of which number I am. I am resolved that you shall open a new scene of behaviour next winter, and begin to pay in coin your debts of fair promises. I have some thoughts of giving you a few loose hints for a satire; and if you manage it right, and not indulge that foolish goodnature of yours, I do not question but I shall see you in good employment before Christmas."*

Gay remained in favour at Leicester House. In January, 1724, he read his play, *The Captives*, to the Princess, and she and the Prince attended a "command" performance at Drury Lane. In the following year he wrote the first series of the famous "Fables" for Prince William,† and the Queen having said that she should "take up the hare," in allusion to the Fable of "The Hare and Many Friends," the poet and his friends thought that his future was assured.

One of Mrs. Howard's most constant friends was Lord Chesterfield, the author of the "Letters." The acquaintance began soon after Mrs. Howard returned to England in 1714, when he (then styled Lord Stanhope) was a Lord of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales. When they began to write to each other cannot be said, but apparently it was soon after the quarrel between the King and the Heir-apparent, for the following playful letters—not necessarily the first that passed—were probably written about 1719.

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 31.

† William Augustus (1727–1765), third son of George II., created Duke of Cumberland, 1726.

LORD STANHOPE TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD'S DOG, MARQUISE

" Bath,
" September 5.

" DEAR MARQUISE,

" I received with a great deal of pleasure the account of your happy delivery, and (as I judge by the brevity and conciseness) from some fair hand of your acquaintance.

" I always thought epistolary correspondence the properest with those of your species, which makes me glad of this opportunity to congratulate you upon this occasion at a distance, where I cannot have your answer by word of mouth. I have no rules to give you for your conduct in the month but to avoid all noise as much as possible, and therefore I would only recommend to you the company of that laconic lady [Mrs. Howard] who sent me that very short relation of your labour, unless you find some few others (which possibly you may) of equal taciturnity.

" I beg of you not to be at all concerned at any insinuations that may be thrown out, that your issue does not bear that resemblance to the father which it ought. Many salvos might be found out for it, if necessary; but it is very long since any wise mother has been very uneasy, or any prudent husband too inquisitive, as to affairs of that kind. The great tenderness I hear you have shown towards your little nursery, is never enough to be commended; and as it may be an example for many parents to follow, and others to blush at, so ought it to be said to your honour, that you use your dogs like children, while they use their children like dogs. But, alas! the care you have hitherto taken relates only to their bodies. The great concern is still to come; I mean the forming of their minds. As to which, I look upon it as their peculiar advantage, and your happiness (notwithstanding what some grave authors assert to the contrary), that they are to have their education in a court, a court that—— ; but as I have the honour to be one of it, I must not give it its due commendations. As example is better than precept, you will there have an opportunity to set before their eyes examples of all kinds. It is impossible but that, among the number of ladies you daily converse with, you may point out to your two female little ones some virtues to imitate, and many faults to avoid; above all, show them the inconveniences of a snappish and snarling disposition, especially in their sex; and if you can produce examples, it would not be amiss neither to caution them against over-discretion, which you may enforce by assuring them, that had you been over-nice, they had not been at all, and you had died a maid.

" As for your issue male, they will likewise reap very great

and glorious advantages from example; for were you only to set before them the nine Lords [of the Prince's Bedchamber], you may make them very accomplished puppies; but you may with very good success take a great latitude, and borrow very useful hints from several others of the family. While they are little you cannot do better than let them play with the secretary; but when they come to dog's estate, bid them imitate, and, if possible, emulate, the magnanimity and fortitude of Herbert and Belhaven, that they may one day be justly promoted to the dignity of house dogs. In short, that your progeny may in time be both the ornaments and the guardians of the [Richmond] Lodge, is the hearty and sincere wish of,

"Yours, etc.,
"STANHOPE."

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD'S DOG, MARQUISE, TO LORD STANHOPE

"I am infinitely obliged to your lordship for the honour of your letter. I need not make any excuse for using the same hand to thank you for it, as I did to acquaint you with my condition: the knowledge you have of that, and the high encomiums you give my secretary, sufficiently justify me in my choice; but even she, my lord, with all her loquacity, wants words to express my gratitude for your tender concern for your fellow-creatures, my little progeny; and I reflected, that the strongest proof I could give you of the high value I set on your advice, was immediately to endeavour to put it in execution: in order to which, I instantly communicated your letter to the whole family, and was pleasingly surprised to find the fair sex unanimously agree each to take their share in this great work.

"Mrs. B[ellenden] promises to teach them the *art of memory*, a thing highly useful, as she daily experiences in the management of her own affairs. Mrs. H[owe] asserts, that there is a *discreet* sort of dissimulation absolutely necessary in a court, and what she practises frequently with great success; which is, to put on a gay, cheerful countenance upon little disagreeable accidents that sometimes will happen in conversation. I could not but approve this innocent fraud, which she engages to teach them. To Mrs. C[arteret] is assigned the charge of deterring them from all little unthinking and unbecoming habits of biting their lips and cheeks, which often rob the fair of part of their charms. To make them mistress of that philosophy of temper, so necessary in life, all agreed to be Mrs. Smith's province. Mrs. Sel[wyn] desires to teach them to sing, and seems confident that, beginning now they are young, she shall easily form their voices to the perfection of her own. Neatness in their persons,

and what the world calls clever, naturally fell to Mrs. P., and she had it assigned to her, *nemine contradicente*. The purity of the French language, and the fulness of the pronunciation, is what Mrs. H[erbert] undertakes, provided she may have Mr. Parthe's assistance.

" Miss L[epell] is to guard them from every little affectation ; but Lord Lumley's little friend has a large share in their education. She is to form them to an easy politeness in every part of their behaviour, and teach them to be witty without sharpness or ill-nature ; will deter them from censoriousness, and give them that sort of generous disposition that despises trifles, and which so distinguishes people of quality.

" I have set my heart on Sir O. for a dancing-master, and to read authors for their edification, as he has heretofore done with great success to himself ; but I have no hopes to engage the secretary for a playfellow. No, no, my lord, he is strangely altered since you knew him ; they must be puppies of the first magnitude to be admitted to his company.

" The great affair of my little females is you see happily settled ; but I shall endeavour, as they all this time pay me a *blind* obedience, to preserve my male offspring in their natural simplicity till your arrival, and to *your* care I shall commit their education. My lord, my ambition goes no further than that they may resemble *you*. What occasion, then, for *nine* lords, when *one* is so proper and all-sufficient for the purpose ? for let them but imitate you, and they will be accomplished in all that is necessary to make their way, and shine in every part of life in which they can be engaged. Belhaven may assist you in the point of making them proper for the *house*, but Lord Herbert, you know, is a novice in that particular. In the *field* I confess he may aid you in their improvement ; but I shall submit all to your judgment, and entirely rely upon it.

" My lord, give me leave to thank you for your partiality to my correspondence, and to assure you that I beg the continuance of that honour ; and am, with great respect,

" Yours, etc.,

" MARQUISE."

Mrs. Howard and Lord Chesterfield became devoted friends, and though Lord Chesterfield had a keen eye for the lady's faults, that he duly set forth in the fragmentary " Character " (which, however, was not published by him, and only appeared many years after his death), he was always on the very best of terms with her.

LORD STANHOPE TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"The Peak,

"June 30, 1725.

"I think I have acquired a sort of a right to troubling you with a letter every time I go to the country; I am sure, at least, I have a temptation to do it, which I cannot resist—that is, your usual goodness in letting me afterwards have one from you.

"After assuring you of my respects, which no place can alter, I am more at a loss what to say from hence, than I should have been from any other part, either of this world or the next; for, were I to give you a true description of this place, I should lie under the imputation that travellers generally do. I will only tell you, by way of specimen, that the inhabitants here are as utter strangers to the sun as they are to shoes and stockings; and were it, by some strange revolution in nature, once to shine upon them, the unusual light would certainly blind them, in case the heat did not suddenly kill them. It is called the Peak; and you have heard that the devil is reported to have some possessions in it, which I certainly believe. For, had I been a papist (as, thank God, I am not) I should have thought myself in purgatory; but, being a good protestant, I was obliged most orthodoxly to conclude myself to be in hell. But reflecting, since, how little good company I meet with *here*, and how much I might expect to find *there*, together with the consideration of my excessive poverty, I begin to believe I am in Scotland, where like the rest of that nation, I only stay till I am master of half-a-crown to get out of it.

"But, after all this, I ought in justice, and, indeed, to *give the devil his due*, to inform you of the satisfactions I meet with here.

"In the first place, the waters, that my father* came here to drink, have done him a great deal of good, and, I hope, have confirmed his health for a considerable time. In the next place, I have my two brothers,† who make it their whole business to entertain me. They never suffer me to be alone, thinking me inclined to melancholy. Then, having heard that I love music, they spare no pains to please me that way: the eldest performing tolerably ill upon a broken hautboy, and the youngest something worse upon a cracked flute. As I would be civil in my turn too, I beg of them not to give themselves so much trouble upon my account, being apprehensive that great expense of breath may impair their lungs; but all to no purpose,

* Philip Stanhope, third Earl of Chesterfield (d. 1726).

† Sir William Stanhope, K.C.B. (b. 1702); John Stanhope (b. 1704).

for they assure me they will venture any thing to divert me, and so play the more.

"Besides these domestic amusements, I have likewise my recreations abroad, both pleasant and profitable: for I have won three half-crowns of the curate at a horse-race, and six shillings of Gaffer Foxeley at a cock-match. But whether this success may not one day or other prove to my cost, by drawing me into gaming, I cannot answer.

"I am afraid I have, like most memoir writers, troubled you too long with the account of my own life; but you will easily excuse me, for the sake of that agreeable variety you will find in it. So, wishing you all imaginable success at Treyace, Commerce, or whatever else may be the prevailing diversion of the Richmond Lodge, I am, with the greatest truth and respect,

"Yours, etc.,
"STANHOPE."*

The waters at The Peak did no permanent good to Lord Stanhope's father, who died on the following January 27, when Lord Stanhope succeeded to the title and estates. On the death of George I. he was continued in his post of Lord of the Bedchamber, and, at the new King's desire, who for once overrode Walpole's objections, he was in April, 1728, appointed Ambassador at The Hague.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"The Hague,
"May 18, 1728.

"Among the many privileges I enjoy here, I exercise none with so much pleasure as I do that which you granted me of writing to you, in order to put you sometimes in mind of a very humble servant, too insignificant to be remembered by any thing but his importunity.

"Could I imagine that you had the goodness to interest yourself in the least in what concerns me here, I could yet give you but a very indifferent account of myself hitherto, the little time I have passed here having been wholly employed in ceremonies as disagreeable to receive as to relate; the only satisfaction that I have yet had has been to find, that the people here, being convinced that I am determined to please them as much as I am able, are equally resolved in return to please me as much as possible, and I cannot express the civilities I have met with from all sorts of people. Notwithstanding which, as far as I

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 82.

can judge, neither my acquaintances nor my pleasures here will make me forget, or even hinder me from regretting those I left at London. My great comfort is, that I have all the reason in the world to believe that my stay here will be highly beneficial both to my body and my soul; here being few temptations, and still fewer opportunities to sin, as you will find by the short but true account I will give you of myself.

"My morning is entirely taken up in doing the king's business very ill, and my own still worse; this lasts till I sit down to dinner with fourteen or fifteen people, where the conversation is cheerful enough, being animated by the patronazza, and other loyal healths. The evening, which begins at five o'clock, is wholly sacred to pleasures; as, for instance, the Forault till six; then either a very bad French play, or a reprize at quadrille with three ladies, the youngest upwards of fifty, at which, with a very ill run, one may lose, besides one's time, three florins; this lasts till ten o'clock, at which time I come home, reflecting with satisfaction on the innocent amusements of a well spent day, that leave no sting behind them, and go to bed at eleven, with the testimony of a good conscience. In this serenity of mind I pity you who are forced to endure the tumultuous pleasures of London. I considered you particularly last Tuesday, suffering the heat and disorders of the masquerade, supported by the Duchess of Richmond* of one side, and Miss Fitzwilliam of the other, all three weary and wanting to be gone; upon which I own I pitied you so much that I wished myself there, only to help you out of the crowd.

"After all this, to speak seriously, I am very far from disliking this place: I have business enough one part of the day to make me relish the amusements of the other part, and even to make them seem pleasures; and if any thing can comfort one for the absence of those one loves or esteems, it is meeting with the good will of those one is obliged to be with, which very fortunately, though undeservedly, is my case. There is, besides, one pleasure that I may have here, and that I own I am sanguine enough to expect, which will make me amends for the want of many others, which is, if you will have the goodness to let me know sometimes that you are well, and that you have not quite forgot that perfect esteem and respect with which I am,

"Yours, etc.,

"CHESTERFIELD."†

* Sarah (d. 1751), eldest daughter and co-heir of William Cadogan, first Earl of Cadogan, married in 1719 Charles Lennox, second Duke of Richmond. She was a Lady of Queen Caroline's Bedchamber, and the mother of Lady Sarah Lennox.

† Add. MSS. 22626, f. 88.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"The Hague,
"July 13, 1728.

"The part which you do me the honour to say you took, both in my illness and my recovery, is too obliging for me to omit the very first opportunity of making you my acknowledgments for it; it has reconciled me to my own illness, for having caused such a declaration, and has added (if possible) to my concern for yours, for having hindered me from receiving it sooner.

"To show you how desirous I am to contribute as much as I can to your perfect recovery, if you can find means to give me that offending head and that provoking face you complain so much of, I will most willingly send you mine in return by the first courier; and though you say they are of no use to the present owner, I assure you they would be of singular use to me. The head should do my master's business, and the face should do my own, and I would find employment enough for them both, not to give them time to ache.

"I find you wrong both my head and my heart extremely, when you think I can blame Lord Finch* for his late exploit: so far from it, that I envy him the glorious opportunity he has procured himself of sacrificing all to love. He has showed the lady the strength of his passion by offering her an estate while he thought he had one; she may now convince him of the strength of hers, by taking him without it: and I shall only blame them both if they do not think five hundred pounds a year a great deal more than enough, where there is such a fund of mutual love to subsist upon. I never heard of the happiest couple in Arcadia, or Arabia the blessed, that had half so good an income.

"I am afraid your time hangs a good deal upon your hands at Richmond, by my being so frequently the subject of your conversations; which I do not flatter myself can be owing to any thing but a great want of something else to do, and I doubt it would be my interest to wish you had some better employment, for I fear I often come off but scurvily. However, since I have put on the new man, I own I should not be sorry to assist, invisibly, at those conversations, to hear how the old one is treated. I shall be extremely obliged to you if you will, when it is finished, send me the anatomy and dissection of my late self, which I have been long so desirous to see that I had some thoughts of taking the opportunity of my late illness to have it given out that I was dead, and dead for love of ——. Upon which I

* Daniel (d. 1769), eldest son of Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham. He was Comptroller of the Household from 1725 until 1730, when he succeeded to the title.

should have seen my own epitaph, elegy, life and character, etc., by Curll, the bookseller, with many other particulars, which no man alive can hear of himself till he is dead. Some would have been astonished that I died for love, who might possibly have called my tenderness in question while alive; others would have wondered how it could be for love of that person, upon whose account they never in the least suspected me—which would indirectly be commending my discretion; in short, various and curious would the accounts have been that I should have had of my deceased self; but I was hindered from executing this design by my chaplain, who is indeed a very good man, and who told me that mocking was catching, and death not a thing to be played with.

"This place, though empty in comparison of what it is in the winter, is not yet without its recreations.—I played at blind man's buff till past three this morning; we have music in the *Wood;* parties out of town; besides the constant amusements of quadrille and scandal, which flourish and abound. We have even attempted two or three balls, but with very moderate success; the ladies here being a little apt to quarrel with one another: insomuch, that before you can dance down three couple, it is highly probable that two of them are sat down in a huff. Upon these occasions I show the circumspection of a minister, and observe a strict neutrality; by which means I have hitherto escaped being engaged in a war.

"I condole with Miss Meadows for her disappointment in not having the gout; and I congratulate Miss Fitzwilliam whenever she returns from grass at Ampthill; I respect Lord Herbert and Fop [Lord Herbert's lap-dog], not without a due mixture of fear of both. I hope to hear soon of my Lord's having quarrelled with [his father] Pem[broke], upon his marrying some necessitous beauty for love; his lordship having given pregnant instances of all heroic virtues but love.

"I do not know whether you will forgive this long and tedious letter: if you do, I beg you will let me know it soon; and if you do not, pray let me hear it before it is long. For if you believe (as I am persuaded you do) that part of my thoughts at least are generally in England, you will do me the justice to believe too, that the greater share of them attend you, and consequently that nothing can be more welcome to that part of them that remains here than any marks of your friendship and remembrance."*

The allusion in the above letter to Lord Finch is to his attachment to Lady Fanny, the youngest daughter of Basil

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 90.

Feilding, fourth Earl of Denbigh. His father, Lord Nottingham, vigorously opposed the marriage—though for what ground it is not easy to discern—unless, indeed, it was disparity of age, Lord Finch being forty, and Lady Fanny about twenty. Mrs. Howard, writing to Gay, June 15, 1728, refers to this unhappy incident, and shows herself clearly on the side of the lovers. "I know you can take a pleasure in others' good fortune," she said. "This way of thinking should make me conceal poor Lord Finch's misfortunes from you; but they are too public; and Lord Nottingham's barbarity furnishes the town with a subject to show the good and ill-nature of mankind. By what I have heard, Lord Nottingham has not only disinherited Lord Finch, in case he marries Lady Fanny Feilding, but has drawn the deed in such a manner (which he drew with his own hand) that when he dies, the profits of the estates are to be paid to trustees, till either Lady Fanny is dead or married, or Lord Finch is married; and yet there are those who say the whole is a family contrivance to break the match. Lord Finch is at Mr. Tufton's; but I have seen the rest of the family, and I think I never saw one in more distress."

Lady Fanny gave proof of her affection by marrying Lord Finch the next year.

For successfully negotiating at The Hague the marriage in 1730 of the Princess Royal with the Prince of Orange, Lord Chesterfield was rewarded with the appointment of Lord Steward of the Household. He retired from the Embassy in February, 1732, and, taking an active part in politics, successfully opposed Walpole's Excise Bill. Lord Chesterfield's three brothers in the House of Commons voted against the measure, as did others who accepted his guidance, and the Minister demanded, and secured, the dismissal of the ex-Ambassador from the Household. Presently, in a letter to Mrs. Howard, dated from Scarborough, August, 1733, Lord Chesterfield poked fun at Walpole's abandoned project. "The people of this town," he wrote, "are at present in great consternation, upon a report they have heard from London, which, if true, they think will ruin them. I confess I do not believe it; not but that there is something probable enough in it. They are informed, that, considering the vast consumption of

these waters, there is a design laid of *excising* them next session; and moreover, that as bathing in the sea is become the general practice of both sexes, and as the kings of England have always been allowed to be masters of the seas, every person so bathing shall be gauged, and pay so much per foot square as their cubical bulk amounts to. I own there are many objections to this scheme, which, no doubt, occur to you; but to be sure too there is one less than to the last, for this tax being singly upon water, it is evident it would be an ease to the landed interest, which it is as plain the other would not have been." Lord Chesterfield thenceforth threw himself whole-heartedly into the arms of the Opposition, and did not again appear at Court. His marriage in September, 1733, with Petronella Melusina von der Schulenburg, who in 1722 had been created Countess of Walsingham, indeed, made the breach irrevocable. George I. had left this lady, his elder daughter by the Duchess of Kendal, the sum of £40,000. This money George II., who had destroyed his father's will, declined to pay, and Lord Chesterfield entered an action at law, which, however, was settled by the King for £20,000 before it came into Court.

In securing the dismissal of Lord Chesterfield, Walpole, it is said, had the support of the Queen. Caroline had liked this "wit among lords, and lord among wits," as Dr. Johnson described him. He won her favour in early days by abuse of Madame von Kielmansegg. "She looks young—if one may judge from her complexion, one would judge her to be eighteen or twenty," said the then Princess of Wales. "Yes, eighteen or twenty stone," replied the courtier. "The standard of his Majesty [George I.]'s taste, as exemplified in his mistress, makes all ladies who aspire to his favour, and who are near the suitable age, strain and swell themselves like the frogs in the fable, to rival the bull and dignity of the ox. Some succeed, others—burst." Horace Walpole says that Lord Chesterfield never knew why he fell into disgrace with the Queen, until the year before his death, when Walpole acquainted him with the reason through his friend John Irwin.* "The

* Sir John Irwin (1728–1788), a distinguished soldier; Major-General, 1762; Governor of Gibraltar, 1766–1768; Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, 1775–1782; K.B., 1779; General, 1783.

Queen," so runs Walpole's tale, "had an obscure window at St. James's that looked into a dark passage, lighted only by a single lamp at night, which looked upon Mrs. Howard's apartment. Lord Chesterfield, one Twelfth Night, at Court had won so large a sum of money that he thought it imprudence to carry it home in the dark, and deposited it with the mistress. Thence the Queen inferred great intimacy, and thenceforth Lord Chesterfield could obtain no favour from Court; and finding himself desperate, went into Opposition. My father himself long afterwards told me the story."* But the fact that Lord Chesterfield was an intimate friend of Mrs. Howard was in itself sufficient to evoke the hostility of the Queen, as, indeed, the Earl was well aware. Walpole remarks that hereafter Lord Chesterfield's liking for Mrs. Howard ceased, and that further, he revenged himself on her for his loss of favour at Court by describing her as "Eudosia" in an article on "Female Coxcombs" in a paper called *Common Sense* (September 3, 1737). In both these statements Walpole is at fault. Eudosia bears not the faintest resemblance to Lady Suffolk, as a perusal of the character-study shows conclusively. "Eudosia," so runs the character sketch, "the most frivolous woman in the world, condemns her own sex for being too trifling. She despises the agreeable levity and cheerfulness of a mixed company; she will be serious, 'that she will'; and emphatically intimates, that she thinks reason and good sense very valuable things. She never mixes in the general conversation, but singles out some one man whom she thinks worthy of her good sense, and in a half voice, or *sotto voce*, discusses her solid trifles in his ear, dwells particularly upon the most trifling circumstances of the main trifle, which she enforces with the proper inclination of her head and body, and with the most expressive gesticulations of the fan, modestly confessing every now and then, by way of parenthesis, that possibly it may be thought presumption in a woman to talk at all upon these matters. In the meantime, her unhappy hearer stifles a thousand gapes, assents universally to whatever she says in hopes of shortening the conversation, and carefully watches the first favourable opportunity which any motion in the company gives him,

* *Reminiscences*, CXXV.

of making his escape from this excellent solid understanding. Thus deserted, but not discouraged, she takes the whole company in their turns, and has, for every one, a whisper of equal importance. If Eudosia would content herself with her natural talents, play at cards, make tea and visits, talk to her dog often, and to her company but sometimes, she would not be ridiculous, but bear a very tolerable part in the polite world." As for the friendship of Lord Chesterfield for Mrs. Howard, it lasted until her death, until which time they continued to meet and correspond.

CHAPTER IX

"THE SWISS CANTONS"

II.—LORD BATHURST, LORD ISLAY, DEAN SWIFT

Lord Bathurst—Pope's appreciation of him—Lord Bathurst introduces himself to Sterne—In opposition to Walpole—Captain of the Band of Pensioners—Created Earl Bathurst—On himself as a courtier—His relations with Mrs. Howard platonic—Lord Islay, afterwards third Duke of Argyll—His love of speculation—The Mississippi Company—John Law—His bank in France—Mrs. Howard buys Mississippi stock—Lord Islay's letters to her anent that transaction—The Prince of Wales also speculates in Mississippi stock—Lord Belhaven acts as his agent—The fall of Law's Company—Law comes to England—His letter to Mrs. Howard—His death—An epitaph—The South Sea Company—Its ambitious scheme—Profuse bribery by the Directors—The Prince and Princess gamble successfully in the stock, and Walpole makes a fortune—The bursting of the "Bubble"—Widespread ruin—The Duke of Wharton—The Duke of Bolton—The Duke of Portland—Lord Lonsdale—Lord Irvine—Mrs. Howard loses money—The termination of the friendship of Mrs. Howard and Lord Islay—Pope introduces Swift to Mrs. Howard—Swift at Court—His hope that Mrs. Howard's influence will secure his preferment—His desire to assist the development of Irish industries—Mrs. Howard presents him with a ring—He sends her an Irish plaid, and offers one to the Princess of Wales—"Gulliver's Travels"—Correspondence between Mrs. Howard and Swift—His next visit to England—His "Character" of Mrs. Howard.

A GREAT favourite with Mrs. Howard was Allen Bathurst, one of the twelve Lords raised to the peerage by Anne in 1712. He was one of the wits of the day, and moved much in literary society. He was the friend of Congreve and Prior and Swift. Pope, with whom he was very intimate, and to whom he was drawn by their interest in gardening, addressed to him one of his "Moral Essays," and thus apostrophized him :

> *"The sense to value riches, with the art*
> *T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart,*
> *Not meanly nor ambitiously pursued,*
> *Not sunk by sloth, nor raised by servitude ;*

To balance fortune by a just expense,
Join with economy, magnificence ;
With splendour, charity ; with plenty, health ;
Oh, teach us, Bathurst, yet unspoiled by wealth !
That secret rare, between the extremes to move
Of mad good-nature and of mean self-love."

He survived until 1775, and his good spirits lasted to the end. When his son* left the dinner-table, he would tell his guests to close up, and say, " Come ! now the old gentleman's gone, let us have another bottle." In his later years, he introduced himself to the author of " Tristram Shandy," who wrote of him with enthusiasm to " Eliza."

Lord Bathurst was in opposition while Walpole was Prime Minister, but on the fall of that great man in 1742 he was sworn of the Privy Council, and appointed Captain of the Band of Pensioners, which office, however, he held only two years. On the accession of George III. he was allotted a pension of £2,000 a year, and in 1772 was raised to the dignity of an earldom. There is a pleasant letter, written in 1725, to Mrs. Howard, in which he gives an account of himself as a courtier :

" That a poor country gentleman should be forgot by his Court friends is no new thing—that he should be troublesome to them is as little extraordinary ; therefore, to keep in the ordinary course of things, it is proper for me to put you in mind of your promise of coming here one day this week, for I am obliged to remove from hence the next. I hope to hear that her Royal Highness is well. I believe I ought to go to Richmond again, to inquire after her health, but if I hear of it I shall be satisfied ; and I leave it to further time to show how sincerely your Jacobite friend is attached to her.

" I am convinced I shall make but an awkward courtier, and I could perceive that some of the folks I met there the last day looked upon me as a wild beast whose teeth and claws had been lately pulled out ; but perhaps they may grow again next winter, and the creature may be found to be tame only to those it likes, and submit to nothing but the Royal Blood. But what if the rest of our herd [*i.e.*, the opposition] should grow tame

* Henry Bathurst, second Earl Bathurst (1714–1794), Judge of Common Pleas, 1754 ; created Baron Apsley, 1771 ; Lord Chancellor, 1771–1778 ; Lord President of the Council, 1779–1782.

Sir Robert Walpole.
From the portrait by Van Loo at the National Portrait Gallery.

[*To face p.* 134

too, and leave off roaring? Your hunters would complain of want of sport, and you may be accused of having spoiled their diversion. You do not know what you have done. I give you fair warning, therefore, whatever happens, do not hereafter accuse your, etc.,

"BATHURST."*

At the time this letter was written the town was agog with excitement, caused by rumours that Lord Bathurst was the lover of Mrs. Howard. "The most surprising news is Lord Bathurst's assiduous court to their Royal Highnesses, which fills the coffee-houses with profound speculation. But I, who smell a rat at a considerable distance, do believe in private that Mrs. Howard and his Lordship have a friendship that borders upon 'the tender,'"† Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote to her sister, Lady Mar; and, shortly after, she gave further particulars to the same correspondent anent the supposed *liaison*. "You may remember I mentioned in my last some suspicions of my own in relation to Lord Bathurst, which I really never mentioned to any one whatever; but as there is never smoke without some fire, there is very rarely fire without some smoke. These smothered flames, though admirably covered with whole heaps of politics laid over them, were at length seen, felt, heard, and understood; and the fair lady given to understand by her commanding officer [*i.e.*, the Prince of Wales], that if she showed under other colours, she must expect to have her pay retrenched. Upon which the good Lord was dismissed, and has not attended in the Drawing-room since."‡ There is, however, no reason to believe that the relations between Lord Bathurst and Mrs. Howard were other than platonic, and this view is certainly supported by the tone of their correspondence, which is never more than friendly.

Lord Islay was an old friend of Mrs. Howard, and one in whose judgment she had the greatest faith. He and his elder brother, the Duke of Argyll, made the arrangements on her behalf for the purchase of Marble Hill, and generally acted as her trustees. Though as a rule careful in business matters,

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 15. † *Letters* (ed. Thomas), I. 367.
‡ *Letters* (ed. Thomas), I. 369.

Lord Islay, however, could rarely resist the temptation to speculate, and when he did so indulge, he was always so confident of success that he endeavoured—unfortunately, often with success—to persuade his friends to follow his example. He almost invariably lost his own and their money.

The year 1719 ushered in a brief period of speculation that affected all classes throughout the kingdom. The madness began in France, after John Law had floated at Paris the Mississippi Company. John Law, the son of a Scotch goldsmith, was already well known across the Channel, whither he had fled in 1694, at the age of twenty-three, after having killed "Beau" Wilson* in a duel. He had studied finance at Amsterdam; and having made a fine art of gambling, contrived within a few years to amass a fortune estimated at £100,000. During this time he made overtures to Louis XIV. with the object of being entrusted with the raising of public credit in France, which was then at a very low ebb. The King, however, would have none of him; but the Duke of Orleans was favourably impressed by his marked gifts for dealing with financial problems, and so were others, including Victor Amadeus, King of Sicily (afterwards King of Sardinia), who invited him to manage his exchequer, and Lord Stair, the English Ambassador at Paris, who wrote to Stanhope† that Law might be usefully engaged in devising a scheme for reducing the English National Debt. Louis XIV. died in 1715, and in the following year Law, with the sanction and approval of the Duke of Orleans, now Regent of France, opened the Banque Générale. The success of this institution aroused the jealousy of the French bankers who, not unnaturally, objected to such a privilege being conceded to a foreigner. To still this outcry, the Banque Générale was in December, 1718, converted into the

* Edward Wilson (d. 1694), better known as "Beau" Wilson, a scion of an old Leicestershire family, a noted dandy, who lived in luxury, apparently on nothing a year. Much curiosity was evinced, and many speculations were rife, as to the source from which he derived his money.

† James Stanhope (1673–1721), Secretary of State, 1714; First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, April, 1717–March, 1718; created Viscount, 1717, and Earl Stanhope, 1718; again Secretary of State from 1718 until his death.

Banque Royale, with its notes guaranteed by the Crown, and with Law as its Director-General. Law was now able to develop a long-cherished scheme. In August, 1717, he had inaugurated the Mississippi Company for the purpose of colonizing the province of Louisiana, which at that time included the vast territories drained by the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Missouri, granted by the Regent; and in August, 1719, this corporation, which had bought up the French East India, China, and Africa Companies, undertook to pay off the French public debts by giving the proprietors Mississippi stock. This stock went to a great premium, and everyone who could invested in it. The infatuation spread to England, and many well-known folk interested themselves financially in it. Few Englishmen "plunged" in Mississippi stock more heavily than Lord Islay, who, thinking he had found a good thing to share with his friends, tempted Mrs. Howard and other friends to yield to the delights of the gamble.

THE EARL OF ISLAY TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Paris,
"September, 1719.

"Notwithstanding the politeness of this place, I have no other way to answer the beginning of your letter, but by a flat contradiction: 'troublesome! impertinent! new favours!' —as to me it is impossible, and even as to others, I have yet so good an opinion of mankind, that those who have least merit, I believe, would think themselves happy in receiving your commands. To show you, in two words, how the thanks you mention are owing on my side, consider that you might have had the friendship of many considerable men by being my enemy, and I could only have received the precarious, nauseous, professions of one silly woman, by not being your friend.

"I have laid out the money you bid me. It is very difficult, in a letter, to give you an idea of the funds of this country; but, in fact, every body has made estates that have been concerned in them for four or five months. As a little instance of this, cousin Jack* has got, I believe, near ten thousand pounds, and has lost the half of that sum, by a timorous, silly bargain he made: for my part, I came after all was in a manner over; and as I never meddle with those matters, I do nothing but buy

* Colonel John Campbell. See p. 36.

books and gimcracks. It is true it is now very late, and yet, by what I am informed by him who knows all, and does all here, I am of opinion that whatever sum you remit here may be turned to great profit. The stocks are now at 950 [livres], and if no accidents happen of mortality, it is probable they will be 1,500 in a short time. The money I laid out for you was 5,000 livres, as a subscriber to the 50,000,000 [livres] of stock lately added*, of which the tenth part only is paid down, so that 5,000,000 is the first payment of 50,000,000 livres. The subscription was full, but Mr. Law was so kind as to allow it me: some of the subscribers have already sold their subscriptions for 230, that is, their own money back again, and 130 per cent. profit. Whatever you think fit to do, you may bid Middleton† remit to me so many livres; I shall acknowledge the receipt of them, and do the best I can. You will think the levity of this country has turned my head, when I tell you that your master the Prince of Wales might, within these few months, have made himself richer than his father. As late as I came, I can tell you, in secret, that I am pretty well."‡

The last sentence of Lord Islay's letter contradicts his statement that he never meddled with these matters, though that may, of course, have been so when he wrote that sentence, and he may have succumbed to temptation later. Certainly he was soon deep in Mississippi stock, and so interested in the scheme that in the following December he published a treatise by Law, with an appreciative preface by himself.

During the winter Mississippi stock went to a great premium. The Rue de Quincampoix, the stock-jobbers' quarter at Paris, was daily thronged with excited speculators, and so eager was the demand, that capital stock of the value of 500 livres changed hands at 10,000 livres. On January 1, 1720, the Mississippi Company declared a dividend of forty per cent., and its stock rose to 18,000 livres. Five days later Law, having entered the Roman Catholic Church in order to be eligible for the post, became Comptroller-General of the French finances.

* At this time the Mississippi Company opened its books for the subscription of 50,000,000 livres of stock, the issue price being 1,000 livres per cent., payable in ten monthly instalments. The whole amount was subscribed in a few hours.

† Presumably Mrs. Howard's agent or banker.

‡ Add. MSS. 22628, f. 47.

THE EARL OF ISLAY TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Paris,

"January 16, 1720.

"It would be very difficult for me to give you any tolerable account of the Mississippi, since I was the last time in France, without writing a pamphlet. Every post I receive from England new terrors concerning it, and, what is really very diverting, some are extremely apprehensive of my losing the money I have got, who, to my certain knowledge, are very much mortified at my getting it: I am not insensible of distant dangers which may attend the funds here, and I wish our own were absolutely free from them; but for the objections which have come from even considerable people in England, they prove more that they have learned their own business by rote than that they have any true notions of the principles of these matters. I know a pretty extraordinary instance of something of this kind, if I could venture to tell; but thus far I may venture to say, that either Mr. Law knows nothing, or some who carry their heads very high in England know less than people imagine.

"I wish I had known of a certain compliment made to Mr. Law (by order) before he told it me himself; for I may say to you, in confidence, without vanity, and without impertinence, that it would have been nothing the worse. It has obliged me to enter into a long, disagreeable, unhappy detail, in order to explain the mystery of my endeavouring to make a friend of mine well with him, and yet concealing his errand from him: as soon as I had justified myself I proceeded to do my duty to my superiors, and that, perhaps, more than would have been prudent in (at least a *volunteer*), if I had not entire confidence in the person I spoke to, and were not master of too much philosophy, and too much money, now to be afraid of doing what I think right. I have often heard of my being *opiniâtre*, but I had always this comfort, that if I had any honesty, a little of the other was very necessary in this world.

"Your money matters go very well, though the *actions* are fallen from 1,900 to 1,750; yet the meaning of it is nothing else but people's selling their *actions* in order to buy the new primes (as they are called), which are a sort of subscription at 2,200—1,000 livres down, and 1,200 six months hence. The Government here will find it so much their interest to prevent any persons losing by the accepting their offer, that I am of opinion there will be something to be got this way. I do from time to time inform my Lord Belhaven of anything that occurs to me for his service; and I believe he will say that I have been useful to him. I shall leave this place in a few days."*

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 49.

From this letter it would appear as if Mrs. Howard had passed on to the Prince of Wales the hint which Lord Islay had thrown out in September, and had sent Lord Belhaven to Paris to speculate on his behalf. It is a little mysterious, but it would seem, as Croker suggests, "that Lord Islay was desired to introduce Lord Belhaven to Mr. Law as a private friend, while Mr. Law was apprised from some other quarter, by order, that Lord Belhaven was employed by the Prince of Wales."* It is possible that Lord Belhaven was the bearer to Law of a pardon for the murder of Wilson, which was granted this year, and that in return the financier gave advice which was of pecuniary benefit to his Royal Highness.

Law on February 23, 1720, fulfilled his dream of uniting the Mississippi Company with the Banque Royale. English newspapers might sneer at him: "If you are ambitious, you must put on a sword, break prison, *if you can—remember that, by the way*—get over the water to some strange country, set up a Mississippi stock, bubble a nation, and you may soon be a great man," so ran a paragraph in Mist's *Weekly Journal;* but in France, anyhow, he was regarded as the greatest man of his day. In that country reckless speculation became the order of the day, and credit was so far strained beyond recovery that on May 27 the Banque Royale was compelled to suspend cash payment. In obedience to the popular clamour, Law, so recently the idol alike of society and of the mob, was removed from the post of Comptroller-General. Nothing, however, could avert the crash. The ruin was widespread, and presently Law had to fly the country, after his house had been attacked, and he had been compelled to seek refuge in the Palais Royal. In December he was at Brussels, and there received, and refused, an offer to go to Russia to undertake the control of the finances of that country. In the following year he paid a visit to England, and was presented at Court on October 22. On the following day he wrote to Mrs. Howard, with whom he was evidently already on good terms:

"Can you not prevail on the Duke [? of Argyll] to help me something more than the half-year? or is there nobody that

* *Suffolk Correspondence*, I. 46, note.

could have good-nature enough to lend me £1,000? I beg that, if nothing of this can be done, that it may only be betwixt us two, as I take you as my great friend; and I am very well assured of it by the honour I had done me yesterday at Court by the King. I had another letter yesterday from France, with the same thing over again. Excuse this, dear Madam, and only put yourself in my place, and know at the same time that you are the only friend I have."*

It is improbable, however, that Law's pecuniary embarrassment was more than temporary, for, even after the collapse of the Mississippi Company, he was only by comparison with his former affluence a poor man. He remained in England until 1725, and then travelled abroad until his death four years later at Venice. A wag wrote the following epitaph:

" Ci-gît cet Ecossais célèbre,
Ce calculateur sans égal,
Qui, par les règles de l'algèbre,
A mis la France à l'Hôpital."

Lord Islay, it is known, was hard hit by his speculations in Mississippi stock, as were many other English folk. There is no information as to how Mrs. Howard fared—probably ill, Croker opines, since, if she followed the advice and practice of her financial mentor she, like him, did not sell out until the stock had fallen to a very low price. Before she knew how this venture would result, she was already investing in the South Sea stock. This Company had been founded by Lord Oxford in 1711 to take over certain public debts, in return for the monopoly of trading to the South Seas; and for many years its affairs were conducted in a quiet way, and under distinguished patronage: its sponsor was its first governor, to him in 1715 succeeded the Prince of Wales, and three years later the King permitted himself to be nominated to that office. Little profit, however, was derived from its exclusive privileges, and its shares were rarely quoted after par. After eight years of comparative stagnation, the directors of this corporation were induced by one of their number, Sir John Blunt,† to endeavour to increase its profits and to

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 53.

† Sir John Blunt (d. 1732), originally a scrivener, mentioned in Pope's " Epistle to Allen, Lord Bathurst."

enhance its importance by enlarging its financial operations. Following the example of Law, Blunt proposed amalgamating the capital stock of the South Sea Company with the funds of the Bank of England, the East India Company, and the Exchequer. This audacious scheme being rejected, Blunt next proposed that the Company should take over the public debts to the amount of over £30,000,000. To this project, after a singular auction between the Bank of England and the Company, the latter offering to pay to the nation £7,000,000 for the privilege, Parliament gave its sanction. This result was brought about by the most profane bribery. The approval of the Court was secured by gifts of stock to the Duchess of Kendal and her two " nieces,"* and to Madame von Platen ; while the adherence of the Government to the scheme was purchased by giving opportunities to Lord Sunderland, Aislabie and James Craggs the elder† to make money for themselves and their friends, without risk to their purses. Robert Walpole had protested vigorously against the project, but he saw in this no reason why, when his advice had been rejected by Parliament, he should not benefit by it, and not only did he invest largely, but he advised others with whom he wished to ingratiate himself to do likewise. " One of W[alpole]'s great arts to please the Princess [of Wales] has been by making her a stock-jobber in the South Sea. They bought in for her that very morning before the great debate," Lady Cowper noted in her " Diary " on May 4. The great debate may have been that of February 2 : anyhow Walpole purchased stock to the value of £20,000 for the Prince of Wales and half that amount for the Princess, at £150 per cent.

It was probably the knowledge of this proceeding which tempted Mrs. Howard to embark in the speculation. At what price she secured the stock is not known, but she was a holder at the end of April, when it had risen to £350 per cent.

* These " nieces " of the Duchess of Kendal were her daughters by George I. The elder was Petronilla Melusina von der Schulenburg (see p. 130) ; the younger was Margaret Gertrude.

† James Craggs the elder (1657-1721), joint Postmaster-General, 1715-1720. He was largely responsible for the frauds of the South Sea Company, and, rather than face the exposure, committed suicide in 1721.

THE HON. MRS. MOLESWORTH TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

" Axminster,
" April 31, 1720.

" After having waited with some impatience to hear from you, I received yours, which made me ample amends, not only by the assurances it brought me of your affection and esteem (than which nothing can be more agreeable to me) but the additional pleasure of hearing you have been successful in the South Sea. If you had considered me, as I really am, sincerely interested in every thing that happens to you, you would have been more particular as to what degree fortune has extended her bounty to you. Perhaps it is talking too much in the style of a lover to say, that if she sees you with my eyes she will bestow her best gifts upon you ; but this I may venture to affirm, that if she has any judgment you must be a favourite."*

The stock rose by leaps and bounds ; at the beginning of June it was quoted at £890 per cent., and at the end of the month at £1,000 per cent.

THE HON. MRS. MOLESWORTH TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

" Axminster,
" June 25, 1720.

" I hope I need not tell you, my dear Mrs. Howard, that I heartily rejoice at your success in the South Sea, for you would have reason to think me void of friendship and gratitude if I did not. Certainly fortune never bestowed her gifts on one who deserved them more, or had a more just or elegant taste for enjoying them. But since she is not always so nice in the choice of her favourites, I cannot forbear repining that it is not in my power to put myself in her way, that I might share those bounties of which she is at present so profuse. To tell you the truth, I am almost South Sea mad, and I find that philosophic temper of mind which made me content under my circumstances, when there was no seeming probability of bettering them, forsakes me on this occasion ; and I cannot, without great regret, reflect that, for want of a little money, I am forced to let slip an opportunity which is never like to happen again. Perhaps you will think me unreasonable when I tell you that good Lady Sunderland† was so mindful of her absent friends as to secure us a £500

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 8.

† Judith (d. 1749), daughter of Benjamin Tichborne, became in 1717 the third wife of Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland. After his death she married Sir Robert Sutton, who succeeded Lord Stair as Ambassador to France.

subscription, which money my father laid down for us, and it is now doubled; but this has but given me a taste of fortune, which makes me more eager to pursue it. As greedy as I seem, I should have been satisfied if I could by any means have raised the sum of £500 or £1,000 more, but the vast price that money bears, and our being not able to make any security according to law, has made me reject a scheme I had laid of borrowing such a sum of some monied friend; but since I have given that over I shall endeavour to be content with the share I have in the good fortune of my friends, among whom I am proud to rank my dear Mrs. Howard."

Walpole sold out his holding of stock at £1,000 per cent. and with the great fortune he acquired rebuilt Houghton and began the purchase of his famous collection of pictures. No doubt the Prince and Princess sold at the same time, for her Royal Highness, at least, realized that South Sea stock, while admirably suitable for a gamble, was worse than useless as an investment. "The Queen [Caroline] used to say," Lord Hervey wrote in 1735, "that this Triple Alliance [of Spain, France and Sardinia in 1735] always put her in mind of the South Sea scheme, which the parties concerned entered into not without knowing the cheat, but hoping to take advantage of it, everybody designing, when he had made his own fortune, to be the first in scrambling out of it, and each thinking himself wise enough to be able to leave his fellow-adventurers in the lurch."*

It was as well that Mrs. Molesworth was unable to make further purchases of South Sea stock, for in August the price of stock began to fall with appalling rapidity: on September 2, it was quoted at £700 per cent., and at the end of the month at £130 per cent. Thousands of families were ruined, many of the highest in the land found themselves reduced from affluence to penury. "There never was such distraction and undoing in any country," William Windham wrote to his brother Ashe.† One may say everybody is ruined who had traded

* *Memoirs*, II. 240.

† William Windham, M.P. for Sudbury, 1722-1727, and for Aldeburgh, 1727-1749, and his elder brother Ashe Windham (1672-1749), were sons of William Windham, of Felbrigg, in Norfolk, by his wife, Katherine, daughter of Sir Joseph Ashe, of Twickenham. Ashe Windham was the father of William, the statesman, who inherited the family estates.

beyond their stock. Many a £100,000 man not worth a groat."* The Duke of Wharton† lost £120,000; the Duke of Bolton was a heavy sufferer; and the Duke of Portland‡ was so hard hit that he was reduced to soliciting the post of Captain-General of Jamaica. Lord Lonsdale§ applied for the Governorship of the Leeward Islands, and Lord Irvine‖ for that of Barbados. The sufferings of lesser folk have been buried in oblivion. How Mrs. Howard fared is not known, but it is to be feared but poorly, since she wrote to Mrs. Campbell: "The fall of stock has given me a large field to amplify upon, and a thousand good reasons for its so doing."¶

Lord Islay, with the Duke of Argyll, was named as trustee for Mrs. Howard in the will of her brother-on-law, the eighth Earl of Suffolk, who died in 1731, but some time after this the friendly relations between the parties ceased, he having transferred his attentions to Caroline, realizing at last her power and the impotence of the royal mistress. "The Queen," Hervey wrote in 1734, "had habituated herself to taking him on account of his having formerly, for a long time together, made his court to Lady Suffolk; Lady Suffolk now hated him as much for having neglected her in order to gain the Queen, which he could never effect. So that his unfortunate situation with both was, being disliked as much by the one for what he was as by the other for what he had been; the one quite forgetting how much she had once been obliged, and the other always remembering how much she had been disobliged."** It is doubtful if he gained aught by this change of face, for although he was promoted in 1734 from the office of Keeper of the Privy Seal in Scotland, which he had held for nine years, to that of Keeper of the Great Seal of

* *Ketton MSS.*, 201.

† Philip, Duke of Wharton (1698-1731).

‡ Henry Bentinck (d. 1726), first Duke of Portland.

§ Henry Lowther, third Viscount Lonsdale (d. 1751), was appointed Governor of the Leeward Islands in March, 1721. He was Lord Privy Seal, 1733-1735.

‖ Richard Ingram, Viscount Irvine (1688-1721), Colonel of the Life Guards. He married Anne (b. 1696), daughter of Charles Howard, third Earl of Carlisle. He was given the post he solicited, but died before he sailed.

¶ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 96.

** *Memoirs*, I. 342.

Scotland, since Walpole had long depended on him for Scotch affairs, there is no reason to attribute the bestowal of higher office to the influence of the Queen.

For the acquaintance of Swift with Mrs. Howard, Pope was responsible. It had long been his desire to make these friends of his known to each other, and on September 14, 1725, he had written to the Dean as an inducement to him to come over from Ireland: "I can also help you to a lady who is as deaf, though not so old as yourself. You will be pleased with one another, I will engage; though you do not hear one another, you will converse like spirits, by intuition. What you will most wonder at is, she is considerable at Court, yet no party woman, and lives in Court, yet would be easy, and make you easy."* Swift came to England in March of the following year, and during his visit made Pope's villa at Twickenham his headquarters. "Dean Swift," his host wrote to William Fortescue, April 2, "is come into England, who is now with me, and with whom I am to ramble again to Lord Oxford's and Lord Bathurst's, and other places. Dr. Arbuthnot has led him a course through the town, with Lord Chesterfield, Mr. Pulteney, etc. Lord Peterborough and Lord Harcourt propose to carry him to Sir R. Walpole, and I to Mrs. Howard, etc."† Arbuthnot, acting on the command of Caroline, took him to Court on April 7, and her Royal Highness received him most graciously, showed an interest in his scheme for the promotion of Irish industries, and promised him some medals, which, however, she never sent, and to which Swift made allusion in his verses on his own death—though his indignation, as will presently be shown,‡ was not due primarily to her Royal Highness's forgetfulness:

> "*From Dublin soon to London spread,*
> *'Tis told at Court, 'The Dean is dead';*
> *And Lady Suffolk in the spleen*
> *Runs laughing up to tell the Queen.*
> *The Queen, so gracious, mild and good,*
> *Cries, 'Is he gone? 'Tis time he should.*

* *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope).

† *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 107.

‡ See p. 193.

JONATHAN SWIFT.
After a portrait by Charles Jervas.

[*To face p* 146.

He's dead, you say—then let him rot ;
I'm glad the medals were forgot.
I promised him, I own ; but when ?
I was only the Princess then ;
But now the consort of a King,
You know 'tis quite another thing.' "

There is no doubt that Swift was pleasantly impressed by Mrs. Howard, albeit it is impossible, in the light of his subsequent behaviour, to dismiss the suspicion that the friendliness on his part was to some extent prompted by the thought that her influence might be effective in securing his preferment in England, the hope of which he had not yet entirely abandoned, and the furthering of unselfish schemes for the development of the Irish industries, which he had much at heart.

DEAN SWIFT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

" September 1, 1726.

" Being perpetually teased with the remembrance of you by the sight of your ring* on my finger, my patience at last is at an end ; and in order to be revenged, I herewith send you a piece of Irish plaid, made in imitation of the Indian ; wherein our workmen here are grown so expert, that in this kind of stuff they are said to excel that which comes from the Indies ; and because our ladies are too proud to wear what is made at home, the workman is forced to run a gold thread through the middle and sell it as Indian. But I ordered him to leave out that circumstance, that you may be clad in Irish stuff, and in my livery. But I beg you will not tell any Parliament man from whence you had this plaid, otherwise out of malice they will make a law to cut off all our weavers' fingers. I must likewise tell you, to prevent your pride, my intention is to use you very scurvily ; for my real design is, that when the Princess asks you where you got that fine night-gown, you are to say it is an Irish plaid, sent to you by the Dean of St. Patrick's, who, with his most humble duty to her Royal Highness, is ready to make her another such present, at the terrible expense of eight shillings and threepence a yard, if she will descend to honour Ireland with receiving and wearing it ; and in recompense, I, who govern the vulgar, will take care to have her Royal Highness's health drank by five hundred weavers, as an encourager of the Irish manufactory. And I command you to add, that I am no courtier, nor have anything to ask."†

* A present from Mrs. Howard.

† Add. MSS. 22625, f. 6.

"Gulliver's Travels" appeared anonymously in October, 1726, and the book immediately attracted much attention. Pope, Gay and Arbuthnot were aware of the authorship, and from the following letter it is evident that they let Mrs. Howard into the secret.

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO DEAN SWIFT

"November, 1726.

"I did not expect that the sight of my ring would produce the effects it has. I was in such a hurry to show your plaid to the Princess, that I could not stay to put it into the shape you desired. It pleased extremely: and I have orders to fit it up according to the first design, for the use of the aforesaid person; as also to have over, by your means, the height of the Brobdingnag Dwarf, multiplied by $2\frac{1}{2}$:—this in a particular parcel. Likewise three for the young Princesses: these must be divided into three shares. For a short method, if you will draw a line of twenty feet, and upon that, by two circles, form an equilateral triangle, by measuring each side you will know the proper division. If you want a more particular and better rule, I refer you to the Academy of Lagado. I am of opinion many in this kingdom will soon appear in your plaid. To this end, it will be highly necessary care be taken that the purple, the yellow, and the white silk be properly disposed; and, though these gowns are for the Princess, as the officers are very vigilant, take care they are not seized. Do not forget to be observant in the disposing of the colours. I shall take all particular precautions to have the money ready, and return it the way you judge safest.

"The Princess will take care you shall have pumps* sufficient to serve till you return to England, but thinks you cannot, in common decency, appear in heels; therefore advises you to keep close till they arrive. Here are several Lilliputian mathematics; so that length of your head or your foot is a sufficient measure. Send it by the first opportunity. Do not forget our good friends, the five hundred weavers. You may omit the gold thread.

"Several disputes have arisen here, whether the Big-endians and Lesser-endians ever differed in opinion about the breaking of eggs when they were either to be poached or buttered, or whether this part of cookery was ever known in Lilliput.

"I cannot conclude without telling you the great joy our island is in upon a yahoo in Bedfordshire having produced a creature half a yahoo and half a ram; and another yahoo,

* Pumps, *i.e.*, shoes without heels. An allusion to high-heeled and low-heeled (High Church and Low Church) parties at the Court of Lilliput.

of Sussex,* has brought forth four black rabbits. May we not hope, and, with some probability, expect, that, in time, our female yahoos will bring a race of Houyhnhnms?

"I am,

"Your most humble servant,

"SIEVE YAHOO."†‡

On receipt of this letter Swift wrote to Pope (November 17): "I am just come from answering a letter of Mrs. Howard's, writ in such mystical terms that I should never have found out the meaning if a book had not been sent me, called 'Gulliver's Travels.'" Since Pope knew that Swift had written the "Travels," it can only be assumed that the Dean was in a playful mood.

DEAN SWIFT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Dublin,

"November 27, 1726.

"When I received your letter, I thought it the most unaccountable one I ever saw in my life, and was not able to comprehend three words of it altogether. The perverseness of your lines astonished me, which tended downwards to the right in one page, and upwards in the two§ others. This I thought impossible to be done by any person who did not squint with both eyes, an infirmity I never observed in you. However, one thing I was pleased with—that, after you had written me *down*, you repented, and wrote me *up*. But I continued four days at a loss for your meaning, till a bookseller sent me the Travels of one Captain Gulliver, who proved a very good explainer; although, at the same time, I thought it hard to be forced to read a book of seven hundred pages in order to

* The "Yahoo, of Sussex" was Mary Toft (1701?–1763), of Godalming, Surrey, the wife of a journeyman-clothier. "On April 23, 1726, she declared that she had been frightened by a rabbit while at work in the fields, and this so reacted upon her reproductive system that she was delivered in the November of that year first of the lights and guts of a pig and afterwards of a rabbit, or rather a litter of rabbits. . . . She made on December 7 a full confession of her imposture." Thomas Seccombe in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

† In "Gulliver's Travels," a Court-lady is called a "sieve" and all women "yahoos."

‡ Add. MSS. 22625, f. 7.

§ This studied obliquity of Mrs. Howard's lines was another allusion to Gulliver, who says that the Lilliputians "write from one corner of the paper to the other, like the *ladies in England*."—Croker.

understand a letter of fifty lines, especially since those of our faculty are already but too much pestered with commentators.

"The stuffs you require are making, because the weaver piques himself upon having them in perfection; but he has read Gulliver's book, and has no conception what you mean by returning money, for he is become a proselyte of the Houyhnhnms, whose great principle, if I rightly remember, is benevolence: and as to myself, I am so highly affronted with such a base proposal, that I am determined to complain of you to her Royal Highness, that you are a mercenary yahoo, fond of shining pebbles. What have I to do with you or your court, further than to show the esteem I have for your person, because you happen to deserve it, and my gratitude to her Royal Highness, who was pleased a little to distinguish me? which, by the way, is the greatest compliment I ever made, and may probably be the last. For I am not such a prostitute flatterer as Gulliver, whose chief study is to extenuate the vices and magnify the virtues of mankind, and perpetually din our ears with the praises of his country in the midst of corruptions; and for that reason alone has found so many readers, and will probably have a pension, which I suppose was his chief design in writing. As for his compliments to the ladies, I can easily forgive him, as a natural effect of that devotion which our sex always will pay to yours.

"You need not be in pain about the officers searching for and seizing the plaids; for the silk has already paid duty in England, and there is no law against exporting silk manufactures from hence.

"I am sure the Princess and you have got the length of my foot, and Sir Robert Walpole says he has the length of my head; so that you need not give me the trouble of sending you either. I shall only tell you in general, that I never had a long head, and for that reason few people have thought it worth their while to get the length of my foot. I cannot answer your queries about eggs buttered or poached; but I possess one talent, which admirably qualifies me for roasting them: for as the world, with respect to eggs, is divided into pelters and roasters, it is my unhappiness to be one of the latter, and, consequently, to be persecuted by the former.

"I have been five days turning over old books, to discover the meaning of those monstrous births you mention. That of the four black rabbits seems to threaten some deep Court intrigue, and perhaps some change in the administration; for the rabbit is an undermining animal, that loves to work in the dark. The blackness denotes the bishops, whereof some of the last you have made are persons of such dangerous parts and profound

abilities: but rabbits, being clothed in furs, may perhaps glance at the judges. However, the ram (by which is meant the ministry), butting with the two horns, one against the church, and the other against the law, shall obtain the victory. And whereas the birth was a conjunction of ram and yahoo, this is easily explained by the story of Chiron, governor, or, which is the same thing, chief minister, to Achilles, and was half man and half brute; which, as Machiavel observes, all good governors of princes ought to be. But I am at the end of my line and of my lines."*

DEAN SWIFT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Newark, in Nottinghamshire,†
"November 28, 1726.

"My correspondents have informed me that your ladyship has done me the honour to answer several objections that ignorance, malice, and party, have made to my Travels, and been so charitable as to justify the fidelity and veracity of the author. This zeal you have shown for truth calls for my particular thanks, and at the same time encourages me to beg you would continue your goodness to me by reconciling me to the maids of honour, whom they say I have most grievously offended. I am so stupid as not to find out how I have disobliged them. Is there any harm in a young lady's reading of romances? or did I make use of an improper engine to extinguish a fire that was kindled by a maid of honour? And I will venture to affirm that if ever the young ladies of your court should meet with a man of as little consequence in this country as I was in Brobdingnag, they would use him with as much contempt, but I submit myself and my cause to your better judgment, and beg leave to lay the crown of Lilliput‡ at your feet, as a small acknowledgment of your favours to my book and person. I found it in the corner of my waistcoat pocket, into which I thrust most of the valuable furniture of the royal apartment when the palace was on fire, and by mistake brought it with me into England, for I very honestly restored to their majesties all their goods that I knew were in my possession. May all courtiers imitate me in that, and in my being, Madam,

"Your admirer,
"And obedient humble servant,
"LEMUEL GULLIVER."||

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 9.

† Gulliver, after his travels, retired to "Newark, in Nottinghamshire." The letter was written at Dublin.

‡ A trinket presented by Swift to Mrs. Howard.

|| Add. MSS. 22625, f. 11.

DEAN SWIFT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"Dublin,
"February 1, 1727.

"I am so very nice, and my workmen so fearful, that there is yet but one piece finished of the two which you commanded me to send to her Royal Highness. The other was done; but the undertaker, confessing it was not to the utmost perfection, has obtained my leave for a second attempt, in which he promises to do wonders, and tells me it will be ready in another fortnight, although perhaps the humour be gone off both with the Princess and you; for such were courts when I knew them.

"I desire you will order her Royal Highness to go to Richmond as soon as she can this summer, because she will have the pleasure of my neighbourhood; for I hope to be in London about the middle of March, and I do not love you much when you are there: and I expect to find you are not altered by flattery or ill company. I am glad to tell you now that I honour you with my esteem, because, when the Princess grows a crowned head, you shall have no more such compliments—and it is a hundred to one whether you will deserve them. Besides, it so happens that the King is too tough a person for me to value any reversion of favour after him; and so you are safe. I do not approve of your advice to bring over pumps for myself, but will rather provide another shoe for his Royal Highness against there shall be occasion.

"I will tell you an odd accident, that happened this night, while I was caressing one of my Houyhnhnms, he bit my little finger so cruelly that I am hardly able to write; and I impute the cause to some foreknowledge in him that I was to write to a Sieve Yahoo—for so you are pleased to call yourself.

"Pray tell Sir Robert Walpole that if he does not use me better next summer than he did the last I will study revenge, and it shall be *vengeance ecclésiastique*. I hope you will get your house [Marble Hill] and wine ready, to which Mr. Gay and I are to have free access when you are safe at Court; for as to Mr. Pope, he is not worth mentioning on such occasions.

"I am sorry I have no complaints to make of her Royal Highness; therefore I think I may let you tell her that every grain of virtue and good sense in one of her rank, considering their bad education among flatterers and adorers, is worth a dozen in any inferior person. Now, if what the world says be true, that she excels all other ladies at least a dozen times, then multiply one dozen by the other, you will find the number to be one hundred and forty-four. If any one can say a civiler thing, let them, for I think it too much from me.

"I have some title to be angry with you for not commanding those who write to me to mention your remembrance. Can there be any thing baser than to make me the first advance, and then be inconstant? It is very hard that I must cross the sea and ride two hundred miles to reproach you in person."*

Swift came to England at the end of April, 1727, and he continued to correspond with her. He was unwell, and thought of going to Aix-la-Chapelle to take the waters, but Lord Bolingbroke advised him not to go abroad as it might injure his prospects at home, and Mrs. Howard gave similar advice. He followed these counsels, which were given in all good faith, but when nothing good came of them, he reproached Mrs. Howard bitterly. In the meantime he composed a "Character" of that lady—the manuscript is dated June 12, 1727—which shows that while courting her influence, he at least preserved an outward semblance of independence:

"I shall say nothing of her wit or beauty, which are freely allowed by all persons of taste and eyes, who hear or see her: for beauty, being transient, and a trifle, cannot justly make part of a *character* intended to last; and I leave others to celebrate her wit, because it will be of little use in the light I design to show her.

"As to her history, it will be sufficient to observe, that she went in the prime of her youth to the Court of Hanover, and there became of the Bedchamber to the present Princess of Wales, living with the rest in expectation of the great event of the Queen [Anne]'s death, after which she came over with her mistress, and hath ever since continued in her Royal Highness's service; where, from the attendance duly paid her by all the Ministers, as well as others who expect advancement, she hath been reckoned for some years to be the great favourite of the Court at Leicester-fields, which is a fact that of all others she most earnestly wishes might not be believed.

"There is no politician who more carefully watches the motions and dispositions of things and persons at St. James's-house, nor can form a language with more imperceptible dexterity to the present situation of the court, or more early foresee what style may be proper upon any approaching juncture of affairs, whereof she can gather timely intelligence without asking it, and often when those from whom she receives it do not know

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 13.

that they are giving it to her, but equally with others admire her sagacity. Sir Robert Walpole and she both think they understand each other, and are both of them mistaken.

"With persons where she is to manage she is very expert in what the French call *tâter le pavé:* with others she is a great vindicator of all present proceedings, but in such a manner as if she were under no concern further than her bare opinion, and wondering how anybody can think otherwise; but the danger is, that she may come in time to believe herself, which, under a change of princes, and with a great addition of credit, might have terrible consequences.

"She is a most unconscionable dealer; for in return for a few good words given to her lords and gentlemen daily waiters, during their attendance, she receives ten thousand from them behind her back. The credit she hath is managed with the utmost parsimony, and whenever she employs it, which is as seldom as possible, it is only upon such occasions where she is sure to get more than she spends. She would readily press Sir Robert Walpole to do some favour for [Colonel] Charles Churchill or Mr. Dodington, the Princess for some mark of grace to Mrs. Clayton, or his Royal Highness to remember Mr. Schütz.

"She sometimes falls into the general mistake of all courtiers, of not suiting her talents to the different abilities of others, but thinking those she deals with to have less art than they really are masters of, whereby she may possibly be sometimes deceived when she thinks she deceiveth.

"In all offices of life, except that of a courtier, she acts with justice, generosity, and truth; she is ready to do good as a private person, and I could almost think in charity, that she will not do hurt as a courtier, unless it be to those who deserve it.

"In religion she is at least a latitudinarian, neither an enemy nor a stranger to books which maintain the opinions of free-thinkers; wherein she is the more to be blamed, as having too much morality to need their assistance, and requiring only a due degree of faith for putting her on the road to salvation. I speak this of her as a private lady, not as a Court favourite, for in this latter capacity she can show neither faith nor works.

"If she had never seen a Court, it is possible she might have been a friend.

"She abounds in good words and good wishes, and will concert a hundred schemes with those whom she favours, in order to their advancement; schemes that sometimes arise from them, and sometimes from herself, although at the same time she very well knows that both are without the least probability to succeed. But to do her justice, she never feels or deceives any person with

promises where she doth not then think that she intendeth some degree of sincerity.

"She is upon the whole an excellent companion for men of the best accomplishments who have nothing to ask.

"What part she may act hereafter in a larger sphere, as Lady of the Bedchamber to a great queen, and in high esteem with a King, neither she nor I can foretell. My own opinion is natural and obvious, that her talents as a courtier will spread, enlarge, and multiply to such a degree, that her private virtues, for want of room and time to operate, must be folded and laid up clean like clothes in a chest, never to be put on till satiety, or some reverse of fortune, shall dispose her to retirement. In the mean time it will be her prudence to take care that they may not be tarnished or moth-eaten, for want of opening and airing, and turning at least once a year."*

This "Character" was not printed during the writer's life, but it was found among his papers and published posthumously. "On its appearance," Horace Walpole has written, "Mrs. Howard (become Lady Suffolk) said to me, in her calm dispassionate manner, 'All I can say is, that it is very different from one which he drew out of me, many years ago, and which I have, written by his own hand.'"† It is difficult to say whether the mistake was made by Lady Suffolk, or whether Walpole misunderstood her, for the printed "Character" is identical with that which was in her possession, and which is extant.

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 4.

† *Reminiscences*, CXXV.

CHAPTER X

THE MARRIED LIFE OF THE HOWARDS

The accession of George II.—The Howards separate after their return to England —Mrs. Howard's "Reflections upon the Married State"—Correspondence between them in 1717—Howard, acting under the authority of the King, orders his wife in 1726 to rejoin him—Her refusal to do so—The correspondence now first published—Howard asks the Princess of Wales to dismiss Mrs. Howard from her service—Letters between the Howards and between Mrs. Howard and Dr. Welwood—The Archbishop of Canterbury addresses the Princess on the subject—Mrs. Howard takes legal advice—A dispute about settlements—Howard's interview with the Queen—Lord Trevor's intervention—An income is settled on Howard—A legal separation is arranged.

THE accession of George II. in June, 1727, brought in its immediate train great personal annoyance to Mrs. Howard, for her husband, who had never ceased to persecute her, now, seeing an opportunity to secure financial benefits, thought the moment ripe to redouble his efforts.

After their return to England in 1716, Howard seems to have been willing enough that he and his wife should go their several ways. What Mrs. Howard thought of her marriage is best shown in her "Reflections upon the Married State":

REFLECTIONS UPON THE MARRIED STATE, BY THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"August 29, 1716.

"What is the Marriage Vow? A solemn contract where two engage. The woman promises duty, affection and obedience to the man's commands, to guard that share of his honour reposed in her keeping. What is his part? To guide, to protect, to support and govern with mildness. Have I performed my part in word and deed? How has Charles answered his? In no one article. How guided? To evil. How protected or supported me? Left destitute, wanting the common necessaries of life; not always from misfortunes, but from choice. What (from justice as well as from humanity, nay, ever from his

vows) ought to have been mine, employed to gratify his passions ? How governed ? With tyranny, with cruelty, my life in danger.

"Then am not I free ? All other engagements cease to bind, if either contracting parties fail in their part. Self-preservation is the first law of Nature. Are married women then the only part of human nature that must not follow it ? Are they expected to act upon higher principles of religion and honour than any other part of the Creation ? If they have superior sense, superior fortitude and reason, then why a slave to what's inferior to them ? How vain, how trifling, is my reasoning ! Look round and see how few of my sex are entitled to govern. Look on myself, consider myself, and I shall soon perceive it is not I that am superior, but as I reflect on one who is indeed, inferior to all mankind. How dangerous is power in women's hands ? Do I know so many miserable wives from man's tyrannic power as I know unhappy and ridiculous husbands only made so by too much indulgence ? Nay, do I know one single instance where great tenderness if attended with submission to a woman's will is not unfortunate to the husband, either in his honour, his quiet or his fortune than own the power justly placed however ye suffered, but still I must believe I am free. What do I propose from this freedom ?

"To have the man I did before disguise would I proclaim my misery, my shame ? would I revenge my wrongs ? The first gives pity or contempt but no redress. The second not in my power without involving myself : his honour now is mine ; had I none before I married ? can I divide them ? how lose his, and keep my own ? "*

About 1717 there was an open breach between husband and wife.

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Hon. Charles Howard

"I have obeyed the commands you sent me by Adshead ; and have removed all my clothes from St. James's. I am very unhappy to be so much under your displeasure that you would not signify your orders to me in some other manner ; I am sensible those words I spoke the last time I saw you, were very wrong, and impertinent, and I shall not pretend to justify that conversation ; but I had flattered myself my early begging pardon for that fault ; might have pleaded with some success for me—and give me leave with the greatest submission, to desire you will reflect upon all our former way of living, and those unhappy circumstances we have been in ; and judge it the prospect returning so that must not be very terrible to me. And though

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 13.

the fears of it, and thinking differently on the obligations I owe the Family I have the honour to serve, occasioned those unhappy words, and that you have resent'd so at in a public manner to own your displeasure. Yet nothing shall dispense me from having the greatest respect for everything that may concern you—who am, etc.,

"H. Suffolk."*

The Hon. Charles Howard to the Hon. Mrs. Howard

[*Circa* 1717.]

"The unparalleled treatment of your behaviour to me has twice endangered my mind; and since I find you persevere in your defiance to my recalling you home again, send this to acquaint you, what I am determined to do; I have consulted (I believe) as good opinions for your coming to me, as I know you have lately done to support the contrary, and depend upon it I will put them in execution. Therefore, 'tis left to your choice, forcing me to these measures or avoiding them by your compliance. If you have any sense of virtue left, or reflexion of reason, you shall find better treatment from me, than I am sure you must in yourself be convinced you can deserve; but if this meets any farther denial, I will immediately take such methods, as the law prescribe, in your case."†

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Hon. Charles Howard

[*Circa* 1717.]

"I am sorry that you should think yourself obliged to make use of such an expression as my unparalleled treatment of you. I have been these several months under your displeasure to such a degree that you thought fit to acquaint me by a message that you would have nothing more to say to me nor consider me as your Wife nor would not concern yourself with what I did and sent me your commands to remove my things from St. James's. After that I did not understand you would judge my remaining in her Royal Highness' Service when you had so expressly abandoned me and dismissed me from living any more with you. Now, Sir, I must own that next to that severe message you sent me that new command is the most surprising thing that has happened. You offer me indeed better treatment than I can deserve; but since that merit of mine is to be weighed only by your opinion of me which is so very cruel and unjust. I have but too good reason to fear worse treatment than I believe the law of England allowed, and in such cases

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 16.

† Add. MSS. 22627, f. 17.

I have always heard a Wife is protected. Since you have given yourself the trouble to consult opinions for my coming to you I hope you will not think it unreasonable for me to take some little time to consider and to advise in what manner I can defend myself against the menaces I have received. I am not, Sir, under any manner of restraint nor does any person whatsoever detain me from you, or interfere in the measures I may happen to take, but the usage I have already met and that which I am to expect makes me think it absolutely necessary to have some regard to my own preservation, though it should not for the present be altogether agreeable to the notions you have conceived."*

Howard about this time seems to have been willing to agree to a separation, if in the articles was included a rearrangement of the settlements. To this, acting on the advice of her friends, Mrs. Howard refused her consent. Nothing was done at the time, but it is evident that proposals of one kind or another were repeatedly put forward, for Mrs. Campbell, writing to Mrs. Howard, April 29, 1722, asked: "I want to know if Mr. Howard came to town, and if he is not plaguing you."† It seems that later Howard put his case before George I., and his next demand, made in 1726, was that, since no satisfactory settlement could be arranged, his wife should return to him. This had the approval of His Majesty, who was ready enough to seize any pretext with which he could annoy his son and daughter-in-law, and an intimation to that effect was conveyed to them. In this there was the makings of a very pretty squabble, but the death of the King a few months later materially altered the situation. Croker says that then "Howard's violence began to subside; the question as to the settlement of the property was speedily arranged, and a formal separation was effected;‡ but this bald summary omits many important particulars. Far more comprehensive, and enlightening, is the account given by Horace Walpole. "Howard," he wrote, "far from ceding his wife quietly, went one night into the quadrangle of St. James's, and vociferously demanded her to be restored to him before the guards and other audience. Being

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 18. † Add. MSS. 22627, f. 94.

‡ *Suffolk Correspondence*, I. XV.

thrust out, he sent her a letter by the Archbishop of Canterbury,* reclaiming her, and the Archbishop, by his instructions, consigned the summons to the Queen, who had the malicious pleasure of delivering the letter to her rival. Such intemperate proceedings by no means invited the new mistress to leave the asylum of St. James's. She was safe under the royal roof, even after the rupture between the King and the Prince (for the affair commenced in the reign of the first George); and though the Prince, on quitting St. James's, resided in a private house, it was too serious an enterprise to take his wife by force out of the palace of the Prince of Wales. The case was altered when, on the arrival of summer, their Royal Highnesses were removed to Richmond. Being only a Woman of the Bedchamber, etiquette did not allow Mrs. Howard the *entrée* of the coach with the Princess. She apprehended that Mr. Howard might seize her on the road. To baffle such an attempt, her friends, John, Duke of Argyll, and his brother, the Earl of Islay, called for her in the coach of one of them by eight o'clock in the morning of the day at noon of which the Prince and Princess were to remove, and lodged her safely at their house at Richmond. During the summer a negotiation was commenced with the obstreperous husband, and he sold his own noisy honour and the possession of his wife for a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year."† Walpole's version of the affair, which he had direct from Mrs. Howard, is, in the main, correct; but he is misleading on some minor points. The correspondence, however, has been preserved, and is now printed for the first time.

The Hon. Charles Howard to the Hon. Mrs. Howard

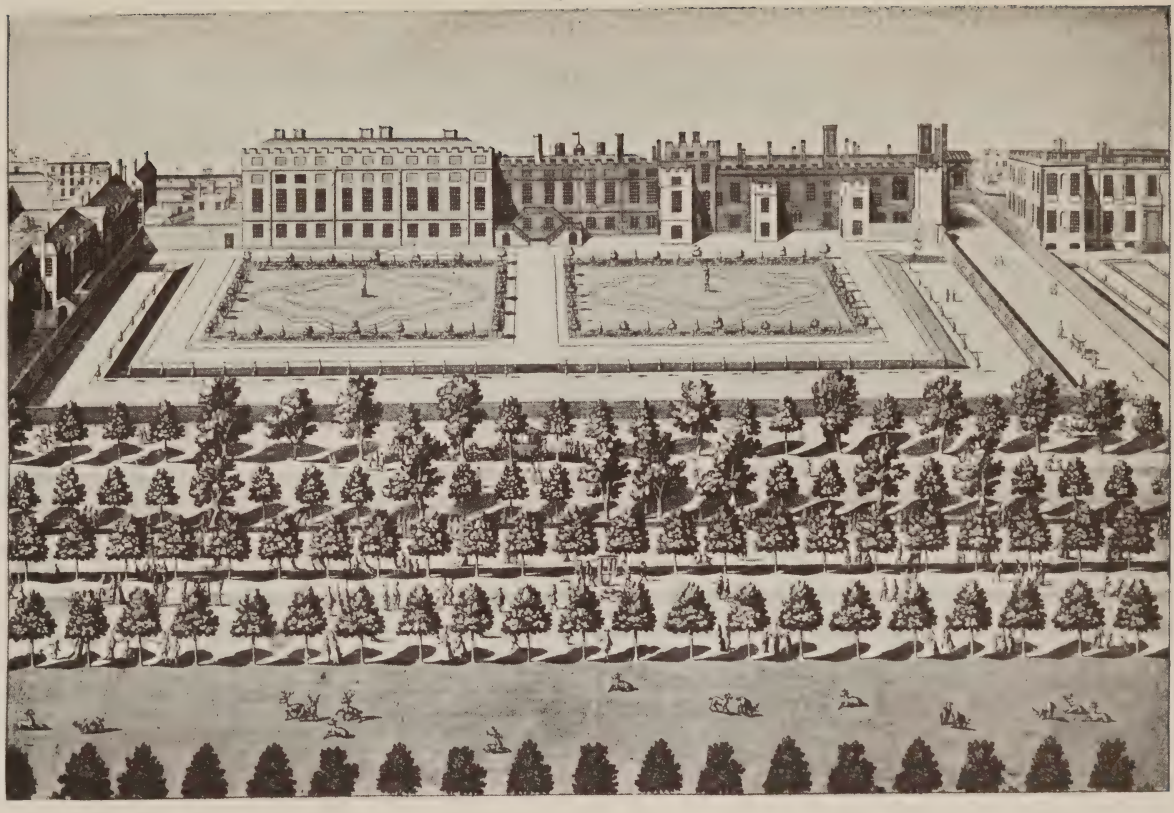
"St. James's,
"December 5 [1726].

"I acquainted you yesterday with the King's Commands, which I think an indispensable duty in me to obey; at the same time I have the utmost regard to their Royal Highnesses, in everything of life, which does not interfere with so strict an order as I have received, therefore doubt not but the Princesse, when she—considering the injunction laid on me, will think it excusable that you leave her service."‡

* William Wake (1657–1737), D.D., 1689; Dean of Exeter, 1703; Bishop of Lincoln, 1705; Archbishop of Canterbury, 1716–1737.

† *Reminiscences*, CXXXI.

‡ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 15.



THE ROYAL PALACE OF ST. JAMES'S IN 1714.
From an engraving at the British Museum

[*To face p.* 160.

THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD TO THE PRINCESS OF WALES

"April 21 [1727].

"Madam,

"It is with the greatest respect and Deference, that I presume Addressing myself to your Royal Highnesse in this manner. When I first received the King's commands for my wife to leave your Royal Highnesse's Service, the persuasions I used with her were ineffectual and this morning I have again received his positive directions, that she immediately retires from her Employment under Your Royal Highnesse. I cannot be insensible of my unhappiness in this difficulty, which makes me hope Your Royal Highnesse will not impute it as any disrespect in me recalling of her by the King's Commands being unavoidable for me to disobey who am

"Madam,

"Your Royal Highness's most duty full and obedient humble servant,

"C. HOWARD."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD

[December, 1726.]

"I received your letter; but you neither mention any place that I may go to nor in what manner you will provide for me if I leave the Princess's service."†

THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"April 28 [1727].

"I am obliged to let you know the King's resentment at your continuance in the Princess's service, in opposition to his first commands, and my endeavours to recall you from thence, since which, I have this morning at Kensington, been peremptorily directed by him to order your removal from her Royal Highness's service; he expects your immediate complyance, which makes me acquaint you, all attempts you can use to the contrary will be in vain."‡

THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"May 2 [1727].

"I have desired the favour of Doctor Welwood to show you the copy of a letter [from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Princess of Wales] by himself transcribed, which I hope will have some effect towards altering the obstinate opinion you

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 25. † Add. MSS. 22627, f. 26.

‡ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 27.

have lately adhered to. I can say no more than this to persuade you (if you have any thought of ease to the small posterity of a child you seemed to love) how ungrateful and shocking a part he must share in life, to hear the reproaches of your public defiance to me, and what the world will interpret the occasion of it. If you come away, as the Princess has fully consented to, you shall be convinced it is not in my nature or inclination, to do anything unbecoming. A man who always loved you, and will continue doing it, give me but the reasonable occasion to justify me in that pursuit."*

[Enclosure]

Copy of a letter from Dr. William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Princess of Wales.

" I am sorry to have still occasion to trouble your Royal Highness about an affair in which I should not on myself nor presume to solicit you, but yet I think both your Royal Highness and that honour concerned in it. Mr. Howard was with me this morning ; I verily believe his coming was not so much to acquaint me with what Lord —— had said to him as to tell him what he intended to do in respect to his lady. This design, as he says, is to proceed to a writ to recover her out of the Prince's House, which, if he pursues it, will make a great noise, and may be improved to the great disadvantages of both your Royal Highness, and, indeed, it is for this means that I and sometimes he will be pushed on to some such attempt by those who would be glad of every opportunity of exposing your Royal Highness to the people ; but I hope your Royal Highness will take some method to prevent any such writ being brought to your house, by getting the lady out of it, which is the only way to come off with honour in this case and defeat the design of your enemies, if they have any such wicked design, against you, for though she should be delivered up when such a course is taken, it will then be thought to be done not out of choice or respect to the justice which Mr. Howard demands, but because she could not be any longer detained. You, madam, who know my hearty zeal for your and the Prince's honour makes me I beg your Royal Highness to excuse my freedome, which nothing but my concern for your service could have emboldened me to use. I can not tell whether your Royal Highness will think it proper for Mr. Howard to be encouraged to come himself and take his wife with him. If that was what you should please to approve I could easily bring it about but dare do nothing without your Royal Highness's directions in so tender a point. I hope

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 30.

this will find your Royal Highness's cold better. I beseech your Royal Highness to excuse the trouble of this letter, which I shall not any more repeat and not to suffer me to incur the displeasure by it with the utmost respect,

"I beg leave, etc."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD

[May, 1734.]

"I received yours and had not so long delayed returning an answer but from the necessity there is of weighing every circumstance and steps in this unhappy affair with the utmost consideration. As to the copy of the letter which was returned me, it seems to me to be little more than what I took the liberty to acquaint you with in my last letter, that I was under no restraint, nor did any person whatsoever interfere in this dispute; that is her Royal Highness does not lay any commands upon me relating to it, but I, having served her faithfully, she does not force me to quit her service but leaves me to take that port which is most safe and most reasonable for me. I have not yet heard of any reason for my leaving my mistress's service but that rule which has been laid down of the wives of those who are in the King's service quitting their places under their Royal Highness's.

"Now, Sir, [I] conceive my case is entirely different from any of the rest, for after having been directly dismissed by you and absolutely discharged your company, after your passions having led you to say more of me than I can with decency repeat, what refuge more safe, more honourable or more rational can a wife so abandoned by her husband have recourse to than to continue in the service of the Princess of Wales where to her husband's great satisfaction and to his and her own honour she was formerly placed?

"You mention, Sir, a tender subject indeed, my child. I wish to God he was of a riper age to be a judge between us. I cannot but flatter myself he would have more duty and humanity than to desire to see his mother exposed to misery and want if not by his father's commands, by yet worse by the influence men in power have over him for the poor precarious expectation of Court favours. You are pleased to say you always loved me. I think I may, with some confidence, affirm my having given many substantial uncommon proofs in great variety of circumstances of life of a dutiful submissive and patient behaviour towards you, and I hope upon recollection when you temperately consider all you have said of me in public and private it is

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 28.

more for your honour to be passive in this matter than for the sake of other persons to hastily press at present for a reconciliation which can be built on no other foundation than mistaken views of your interest."*

The Hon. Charles Howard to the Hon. Mrs. Howard

"*Circa* May 7, 1727.

"I desired Doctor Welwood last week to show you the copy he himself wrote from the Archbishop's letter to me; wherein the Princess of Wales assures me in this expression (that she will by no means keep you from me). Once more I insist on your coming home to me, and have this for my justification; that every disinterested person living, who does not flatter you, and encourage this misbehaviour in you, is ashamed to think of your treatment to me. If nothing else can prevail with you I will immediately proceed to these methods, that I would have you remember yourselfe has wholly occasioned."†

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Hon. Charles Howard

[May, 1727.]

"I wrote to you on Tuesday and sent it yesterday morning inclosed to Doctor Welwood. I have in that letter I believe said as much as is necessary to justify my behaviour both to you, and all mankind, and if my case is impartially considered neither my interest nor safety could warrant any other part than that I have taken in the unhappy circumstances I am involved in; and if you have resolved to have recourse to all such methods as may flatter you will prove my ruin, in that case I shall have nothing to reproach myself with whatever are the consequences, but shall even then as far as is consistent with my reason I shall act for the advantage of us both."‡

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Hon. Charles Howard

"It is a comfort to me in my most unfortunate circumstances that I can never be left without an excuse for what may happen with those whose impartiality will allow them fairly to weigh the different steps that have been taken in this melancholy affair, and it is not without some satisfaction that I reflect your cooler thoughts will suggest to you a better opinion of me than your present warmth will admit of; as for whatever ill way may attend me the world must in justice attribute it to the evil influence our common enemies have unfortunately obtained over you."§

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 31.

† Add. MSS. 22627, f. 32.

‡ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 33.

§ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 24.

THE HON. CHARLES HOWARD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"St. James's,
"May [1727].

"I shall, for your ease and my own, confine my answer to your last favour in as short a compass, as the observations on it can admit. You are pleased to say the resolutions you are taking, proceed from no other motive, than my welfare and happiness, your son's and your own: I wish it might appear from any other demonstration, than your repeated denial of living with me as you ought to do.

"The pretence of your dismission by Adshead, can in no kind serve your purpose, things of that nature requiring a more peremptory discharge; and it was not to be imagined, but I might express myself with some warmth, when you sent for your things, in such contempt and defiance of me. Two pages of your book (for I cannot call it a letter) is extolling your gratitude to your mistress. I think it a very commendable principle; yet when you are so fond of the belief, that no human misfortunes whatsoever were equal to the guilty conscience of deserting a mistress, this argument seems a little too high strained in opposition to your marriage-duty, and is a doctrine, that I believe neither sense, religion, or common honesty will justify. My employment is owing to the King's favour, when I asked him for it in Holland. And as to what you mention, relating to your fortune, I believe it was six thousand pounds—out of which I persuaded you to settle four [thousand] before our marriage. The recovery of this, by a pursuit of six years and [a] half in law, at the expense of near fifteen hundred pounds, and after living twelve years together (till you thought proper to do otherwise) I shall leave it for you to judge, the gains I must have reaped by two hundred pounds a year interest money; and though the weighty invective of your words are so plentifully bestowed on me, yet you had a share in former years from him who was not a beggar when he first knew you. Circumstances since that time are altered (though not so well as wished for), yet I cannot foresee the necessities you apprehend, unless you are the occasion of them. If your misfortunes, as you term them, were of an older date than your leaving me; recollect the manner of your living at that time, and think if I could have reason to applaud, or thank you for it.

"The tenderness mentioned for your son, would be better justified than in feigned expression, whilst you disown me; and when you can reconcile yourself as you are again invited to do, you may find comfort in that circumstance which without it, you are endeavouring to destroy. The cause of dis-union is wholly on your part; and if you think it a preposterous method

to do otherwise I shall think it more so, to have my son concerned with such as live wilfully, in an unjustifiable manner from me, and I can assure you further, that no artifice, or temptation of reward upon earth, will ever prevail with him to desert me or disobey my injunctions.

"Thus I have wrote you my sentiments, and shall have my letters attested, for the better justification of such measures, as I may be obliged to pursue."*

DR. JAMES WELWOOD TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"May 15 [1727].

"I had the honour of yours on Wednesday last, and called at Mr. Howard's next morning where I left your letter to him, not finding him at home. I could not get a sight of him till an hour ago, when we talked over the matter at some length. I shall not trouble you with a long detail from conversation. All I need to say is that he appears highly incensed, but denies positively that he ever abandoned or designed to abandon you as you expressed in your letter. I told you at our last meeting, what I still think, and with more reason than ever, that to get time in this unlucky affair is gaining a great point, and if I may venture to give you my opinion, it is not for your interest to treat any message of his roughly, which is still his great complaint. Time may wear out both private and public impressions and being passive sometimes is of great use in the conduct of life. You may perhaps think I was neglectful of my promise of sending you my Lord Archbishop's letter, but the very next morning after I was with you I received the enclosed letter which made it impossible to comply with your commands. I need not trouble you any further at this time, but assure you I would spare no pains to put an end to this affair to your satisfaction."†

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO DR. JAMES WELWOOD

"I am extremely obliged to you, and shall always be ready to acknowledge that handsome manner with which you show yourself my friend. The thanks you refuse convinces me that I am much indebted. Those who are most capable of doing an act of friendship are often those who endeavour most to conceal it. I have not been abroad since I left London, nor have I courage yet to venture out, for though [I] enjoy quiet at present, I am still in fears things may change to my disadvantage: which puts me upon advising with my friends to know their opinions whether this may not be a good time now there is a calm,

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 39. † Add. MSS. 22627, f. 34.

to have somebody propose to Mr. Howard to enter into articles; that if hereafter anything should happen, it may not be in the power of our enemies again to torment us, and considering our circumstances it is not very probable we should ever like to live together again. After what I have said I need give no reason for not meeting you, but I assure you I should have been very glad to have seen you, but since I can't have that satisfaction I desire to hear from you with your thoughts of this project of negotiating with Mr. Howard for a separation."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO DR. JAMES WELWOOD

[May, 1727.]

"I am informed that Mr. Howard will not prosecute the affair any further, but since I cannot hear any reason given for this alteration, I still beg you will see him, but if you should find him in so good a disposition as not to think of taking me from hence, I believe you will think it not advisable to let him know how far I have trusted you. In the other case I beg you will make use of all your [influence] to bring him to that temper, and by saying all you shall think proper show how impossible it is for me ever willingly to live with him; or quit this family whose service defends me from that poverty and want and that more insupportable misfortune of being ill-treated."†

J. DARNALL TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"December 23, 1727.

"I cannot avoid being under an uncommon concern since I found you under such terrified apprehensions of ill-usage from the person who ought to be your security and protection, but since the particular esteem of the law of England is, that a husband cannot misuse his wife and that their law will provide a certain security against such offenders, I hope you will believe, that your fears are to have no continuance beyond your own submission to them, and lest anything that passed when I had the honour of waiting on you last night slipped your observation, I thought it not improper to trouble you with this, which your greater leisure may give you an opportunity of acquainting yourself by. I think you have no occasion, to deprive yourself of the liberty of going where you please and being secure in such freedom; as for the writ you have been threatened with (*de homine replegiando*) I am of opinion no such writ can be brought, to take you from the place you are in, nor will such writ be unless the person supposed to be restrained complains of that restraint and is secreted. Therefore as it will not be against you,

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 35. † Add. MSS. 22627, f. 36.

I submit to better judgments whether such means are proper to be used against him, for the girl's mother may be willing, and consent to the bringing of it, it cannot prevail, without an oath that the daughter is so kept against her will, and if the daughter should signify her satisfaction, or acquiescence, in the sort of life she is now engaged in, that will make such proceedings fruitless and in my humble opinion will give an improper foundation of converse to the world. I do, therefore, think that the noble person who hath already taken trouble on his behalf should be asked, if he is willing to continue his endeavours of accommodation, and if he is that he will define and insist to have his authority, and direction in writing, if he will meddle no more or cannot prevail to have such instructions, some other person should be employed in the same way, and if neither can prevail, I think no time should be lost and that a suit should be forthwith instituted, in the spiritual courts against him, for a divorce, by reason of his adultery, and ill-treatment of you, and according to the method of their proceedings, everything may be set forth in the libel that fancy can suggest, and some of the facts therein charged may strike him with a belief, that such discovery hath been made as may obtain the end of such suit, and that it will be of greatest advantage to him to stop such proceedings, and bring him to a temper of asking or receiving moderate terms, and convince him that such terms will be more than he in justice can deserve or by the assistance of any of his accomplices he can obtain. I think also that you have sufficient foundation, to have security for the power against him, and if I can guess at the future conduct of the man, by your account of his temper, and company, you will sooner have him in your power by his breach of such security than any other way, and this is a method free of all reflections which malice can invent, my Lord Duke [of Argyll] was pleased to recommend to me the assisting you, not only in my way, but as a friend, and, therefore, I could not leave the town (which I do for a few days) without offering my mite to your consolation. Your commands to my house in London, will quickly reach me, on any occasion, and I shall take all opportunities of acquiring the honour of that character and of showing myself

" Your most faithful humble servant,

" J. Darnall."*

The Hon. Charles Howard to the Hon. Mrs. Howard

" February 22 [1728].

" Lest it might be too tedious to remember by a message, I take this method to acquaint you that since all your brother's

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 19.

promises prove ineffectual as to any satisfaction of that sorrow I have undergone so much vexation for; I could not think it unreasonable for the future not to give him any trouble by being farther concerned in any part or circumstance with him; which made him go this morning to Brigadier Hobart, as I intend to-morrow to Doctor Welwood, to desire the four thousand pounds may be raised and paid into their hands, to be disposed of in any safe manner they shall approve of. This can be no benefit to me more than an ease, by being disentangled from any concern with a person who has done me so much prejudice. I desire to know if you will oppose it, and am truly sensible of the folly I committed in making you so independent of me, which with some other unwarrantable motives has encouraged you to abandon me in the manner you have done."*

The Hon. Mrs. Howard to the Hon. Charles Howard

[February, 1728.]

"I was extremely concerned for my own unhappiness in being under your displeasure, and to find you have a resentment against my brother adds to my uneasiness, but his not complying to your demands will not, I hope, engage you to endeavour anything that may hereafter prove a disadvantage to the child. I believe it is no longer in my power to be active in the disposition of the four thousand pounds, and I am of opinion when you come to consult the trustees, you and Dr. Welwood will find according to the interest money now bears it can be taken from my brother's estate to any advantage either of profit or security; and I am sure you would not even command my consent but on those conditions, and however you command the settlements you made me out of my own fortune, I have as yet made no use of it but so have the pleasure of writing my name in a receipt for your use, and I know of no unwarrantable motive that induced me to abandon you nor can you reflect upon my behaviour and not believe I could have suffered any misery for you while it was your advantage and I am the child not in the fears of starving through the whole course of our lives."

Neither Walpole nor Croker (when editing the "Suffolk Correspondence") was aware, however, that the threat to abduct his wife was made by Howard in the course of an interview which he had with Caroline after she became Queen. This first became known when Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" were published in 1848. "The Queen," he had recorded in 1735,

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 21.

" told me the whole history of the bustle Mr. Howard had made to take his wife from Court, and that, when Mr. Howard came to her Majesty, and said he would take his wife out of her Majesty's coach if he met her in it, she had bid him, ' Do it, if he dare ' ; ' though,' said she, ' I was horribly afraid of him (for we were *tête-à-tête*) all the while I was thus playing the bully. What added to my fear upon this occasion,' said the Queen, ' was that, as I knew him to be so brutal, as well as a little mad, and seldom quite sober, so I did not think it impossible but that he might throw me out of that window (for it was in this very room our interview was, and that sash then open just as it is now) ; but as soon as I had got near the door, and thought myself safe from being thrown out of the window, *je pris mon grand ton de reine, et je dissois* I would be glad to see who would dare to open my coach-door and take out one of my servants ; *sachant tout le temps qu'il pouvait faire s'il le voulait, et qu'il auroit sa femme, et moi l'affront.* Then I told him that my resolution was positively neither to force his wife to go to him if she had no mind to, nor to keep her if she had. He then said he would complain to the King ; upon which *je prenois encore mon haut ton*, and said the King had nothing to do with my servants, and for that reason he might save himself that trouble, as I was sure the King would give him no answer but that it was none of his business to concern himself with my family ; and after a good deal more conversation of this kind (I standing close to the door all the while to give me courage) *Monsieur Howard et moi nous donnions le bonjour, et il se retira.*' "* The matter, however, did not end with the withdrawal of Howard. " After this," the Queen continued her narrative to Lord Hervey, " that old fool my Lord Trevor† came to me from Mrs. Howard, and, after

* Hervey : *Memoirs*, II. 186.

† Thomas Trevor (1658–1730), Solicitor-General, 1692 ; Attorney-General, 1695 ; Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, 1701 ; created Baron Trevor of Bromham, 1712, being one of the twelve peers created to overpower the resistance of the Lords to the Treaty of Utrecht ; removed from office on the accession of George I. ; Lord Privy Seal, 1726–1730 ; President of the Council, 1730.

An excellent story is related anent Lord Trevor. When speaking in the House of Lords in 1721 in favour of the Blasphemy Bill, he remarked, " I verily believe the present calamity, occasioned by the South Sea project, is a judgment of God on the blasphemy and profaneness of the nation ; " whereupon Lord

thanking me in her name for what I had done, proposed to me to give twelve hundred pounds a year to Mr. Howard to let his wife stay with me ; but as I thought I had done full enough, and that it was a little too much not only to keep the King's guenipes " (in English, trulls) " under my roof, but to pay them too, I pleaded poverty to my Lord Trevor, and said I would do anything to keep so good a servant as Mrs. Howard about me, but that for the twelve hundred pounds a year, I really could not afford it."*

There is no doubt that Howard, by appealing to the law, could have obtained possession of his wife, or, anyhow, have caused much annoyance and created much scandal ; and Mrs. Howard and her friends were seriously distressed. " Your letter unfeignedly gives me great disquiet," Pope wrote to her, October, 1727. " I do not only *say* that I have a true concern for you : indeed, I *feel* it many times, very many, when I say it not. I wish to God any method were soon taken to put you out of this uneasy, tormenting situation. You, that I know feel even to delicacy upon trifling occasions, must (I am sensible) do it to a deep degree, upon one so near and so tender to you. And yet, as to the last thing that troubles you, (the old usage of Mr. H[oward] to his son) I would fain hope some good may be derived from it. It may turn him to a reflection, that possibly his mother may be yet worse used than himself ; and make him think of some means to comfort himself in comforting her. If any reasonable creature (any creature more reasonable than his horses or his hounds, or his country gentlemen) were but about him, sure some good might arise from it. It is a trouble to me not to be able to see and talk to you while you stay at Kensington. I will not fail to wait on you at London the next week ; and yet God knows, when I reflect how little use or good I can be to you, but merely in wishes, it is a sort of vexation to me to come near you." The difficulty was overcome, for Howard's only object in making this pother was to obtain money. It has frequently been said that the King subsequently paid Howard twelve

Onslow promptly delivered himself of the retort : " The noble Lord who has just spoken must then be a great sinner, for he has lost considerably by the South Sea scheme."

* Hervey : *Memoirs*, II. 187.

hundred pounds a year, and this is true, with this proviso: he increased his mistress's allowance by that amount, and she paid it to her husband. "Mrs. Howard," Gay was able to report to Swift, March 20, 1728, "is happier than I have seen her ever since you left us, for she is free as to her conjugal affairs by articles of agreement."

CHAPTER XI

GEORGE II., QUEEN CAROLINE AND MRS. HOWARD

1727–1733

Enhanced importance of Mrs. Howard after the accession of George II.—She is congratulated on her lover becoming King—Martha Blount's letter—She occupies the Duchess of Kendal's apartments at St. James's—Suppliants for her favour—Regarded as the most direct avenue to the King's ear—Swift on patronage—Sir John Jennings—Richard Hampden—Lady Chetwynd—Mrs. Howard indignant at the offer of bribes—Hon. Mrs. Pitt—Hon. Walter Molesworth—Mrs. Howard delighted in tributes to her power—She has no influence in the bestowal of places—Her suggestions vetoed by the Queen and Walpole—The King's dread lest anyone should know he was governed by his consort—A pasquinade—The King's attempt to assert himself.

THE accession of her lover to the throne brought Mrs. Howard into greater prominence, and vastly enhanced her importance. It was, almost as a matter of course, regarded by her friends as an occasion for offering their congratulations.

MARTHA BLOUNT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"June 20, 1727.

"Till I received a message from dear Mrs. Howard by Mr. Schütz I thought the kindest thing I could do was not to trouble you with any visits or letters, and I wish others had been as considerate of you; for the contrary (I hear) has had the effect I apprehended it would, of making you ill, which I am heartily sorry for. I have rejoiced, and shall always, at every thing that happens to your advantage, and yet I have been in the spleen ever since you left Richmond; but as I know you love to do good, I shall tell you, you have it almost as much in your power to please me now as when I was your neighbour; for every time you let me hear from you, or let me know when I may wait upon you conveniently, as I am quite out of your way, I shall look upon it as a greater mark of your kindness.

"I wish you would employ me at Marble Hill, I cannot but fancy I might do you some service there. I am so very dull

and I might say (which would be some excuse) not very well, and very low spirited, that I will make no apology for saying no more."*

Martha Blount was correct in her surmise, and, as Lord Chesterfield put it, "the busy and speculative politicians of the ante-chamber, who knew everything, but knew everything wrong, naturally concluded that a lady with whom the King passed so many hours every day must necessarily have some interest with him, and consequently applied to her."† Her apartments at St. James's, which were those that in the previous reign had been occupied by the Duchess of Kendal, were thronged with applicants for her support in favour of their petitions for places and pensions; and all sorts and conditions of people desired to use her as the most direct avenue to the royal ear.

Swift asked her to discuss with the King who should be his Majesty's successor as Chancellor of Dublin University; and in another letter, written to support the claims of a Mrs. Prat, wrote amusingly of patronage. "I can only say," so runs the passage, "that when I was about Courts, the best lady there had some cousin, or near dependent, whom she would be glad to recommend for an employment, and therefore would hardly think of strangers: for I take the matter thus, that a pension may possibly be got by commiseration, but great personal favour is required for an employment. There are, Madam, thousands in the world, who, if they saw your dog Fop use me kindly, would the next day in a letter tell me of the delight they heard I had in doing good; and, being assured that a *word of mine* to you would do anything, desire my interest to speak to you to speak to the Speaker‡ to speak to Sir R. Walpole to speak to the King, etc. Thus, wanting people are like drowning people, who lay hold of every reed or bulrush in their way. One place I humbly beg for myself, which is in your own gift, if it be not disposed of —I mean the perquisite of all the letters and petitions you

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 6. † *Works* (ed. Mahon), II.

‡ Sir Spencer Compton (1673–1743), entered Parliament in 1698; Speaker of the House of Commons, 1715–1727; created Baron Wilmington, 1728, and Earl, 1730; Lord Privy Seal, 1730; Lord President of the Council, 1730–1742; First Lord of the Treasury, 1742–1743. See p. 179.

receive ; which, being generally of fair, large, strong paper, I can sell at a good advantage to the band-box and trunk-maker, and I hope will annually make a pretty comfortable penny."

Sir John Jennings* requested Mrs. Howard to excuse to their Majesties his absence at Court, on the grounds of his serious ill-health ;† Richard Hampden‡ wrote to her about what he alleged to be the persecution he had suffered at Walpole's hands, from which only Majesty itself could relieve him ;§ and Lady Chetwynd|| expressed to her the regret which her husband felt at being removed from the post of Ranger of St. James's Park and Keeper of the Mall,¶ others less wisely attempted to bribe her to use her influence on their behalf. Any such proposal, however carefully veiled, she resented bitterly, and promptly brought the offender to book. She had earlier, in November, 1722, been incensed by the receipt of the following letter from the Hon. Mrs. Pitt :**

" It was a great mortification to me not to be able to pay my duty to her Royal Highness last night, but I have been confined to my bed these two days ; otherwise I should have had an opportunity to have asked you a question without giving you this trouble, which I hope you will pardon, and favour me with an answer : which is, whether the Lord of the Bedchamber

* Sir John Jennings (1664–1743), Admiral of the White, 1709 ; a Lord of the Admiralty, 1714–1727 ; Governor of Greenwich, 1720–1743 ; Rear-Admiral of England, 1733.

† Add. MSS. 22628, f. 42.

‡ Richard, great-grandson of the famous John Hampden, a Teller of the Exchequer, 1716–1718 ; Treasurer of the Navy, 1718–1720. He left office £80,000 in debt to the Crown, and an Act of Parliament was passed 12 Geo. I. " for vesting in trustees the real and personal estate of Richard Hampden, Esquire, for making some provision for his wife and children, and for the better securing the debt due from him to the Crown." He was remotely connected with Mrs. Howard, for John Hampden was also her great-grandfather, John Hampden's daughter, Mary (b. 1630), having married Sir John Hobart, Bart., of Blicking, Norfolk.

§ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 18, *et infra*.

|| Mary (d. 1741), daughter of John Berkeley, Viscount Fitzharding, married Walter Chetwynd, first Viscount Chetwynd.

¶ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 79.

** Harriet, younger daughter of George Villiers, fourth Viscount Grandison, married Robert, eldest son of Thomas (" Diamond ") Pitt. One of the sons of this marriage became Lord Chancellor.

to the Prince is appointed in my Lord Hertford's place. If not, my brother Grandison* would offer his service to his Royal Highness, if you will be so good as to let me know if it would be well received, or if any one else has been named ; otherwise, he would engage some friends to speak to the Prince : and if you think it proper (as he has been informed it is usual to make presents on such occasions), I will bring you *a thousand guineas* to dispose of to whoever is proper, but desire his name not to be used in vain ; therefore I ventured to impart this matter to you, whose honour and *secrecy* I depend on."

Mrs. Howard's reply to this insulting overture has not been preserved, but it must have been to the point, since Mrs. Pitt hastened to send a not very plausible explanation :

" I ask your pardon for the freedom I have taken, and return you a thousand thanks for the justice you did me in letting her Royal Highness know my sincere wishes for her health and happiness. I believe my brother could never have intended a *bribe* to any of their Royal Highness's family, but was informed a present was usually made on such occasions, which I should not have named to you but to be informed, as believing you must have heard more of such matters by living so long at Court. I should only be glad to have their Royal Highnesses know my brother's desire to serve them, whether it is accepted or not."†

Now another angered her in the same way, and less excuse can be found for this offender, the Hon. Walter Molesworth, for, since his deceased wife had been an intimate friend of Mrs. Howard, he should have known her character better.

" I conceive that the late incident [the accession of George II.] has given you an increase of power, which may bear some proportion to the benevolence of your mind ; and, as this is very diffusive, I would fain hope it may take in even me. My ambition aspires to serving the Prince of Wales in quality of Groom [of the Bedchamber] or equerry ; and if, through your friendship, I could attain that honour, it were doubly gratified. For the rest, whatever conditions or provisos you may annex to this favour, they should with all cheerfulness be obeyed."

This epistle remained unanswered, but, clearly, the recipient did not disguise her opinion of it when speaking to her friend,

* John Villiers (d. 1766), fifth Viscount Grandison ; created Earl Grandison, 1721.

† Add. MSS. 22629, f. 13.

Miss Welwood, Molesworth's sister-in-law. Yet it is a tribute to her goodness of heart that, hurt as she undoubtedly was, she endeavoured to further her suppliants' cause.

"My sister [in-law] Welwood's friendship would not suffer her to conceal from me, that a passage in my former had given you some offence. You will readily agree (without urging the esteem I owe you) that to shock your delicacy, as in common prudence it was not my business, could not consequently be my meaning. What therefore I intimated, relating to conditions, was no more than what I conceived became *me*, who had no other merit to plead than an useless zeal for your service; and I also thought it very consistent with the character so applicable to you, of a *diffusive* benevolence, which never fails to draw a train of solicitors, all expecting to be gratified in different ways. Now, though I indulged the thoughts of having some share in your friendship, I could not yet flatter myself it should be a large one, and therefore thought the tax upon it too great to receive entire: for the rest, you will allow something to my being unpractised in solicitations of this nature. I am infinitely obliged by your kind recommendations of me to the Duke [? of Argyll]; yet were it permitted me to choose a patronage, I must needs say I should prefer that of your own; not only as I think it were more effectual in my case, but it is certain that the benefit is enhanced in proportion to the peculiar esteem and regard with which I am, Madam,

"Yours, etc.,
"W. Molesworth."

It is not to be denied that Mrs. Howard delighted in these tributes to her power, and she could not bear to dismiss the applicants. "Solicitors surrounded her, which she did not reject knowing that the opinion of having power often procures power," Lord Chesterfield has recorded. "Nor did she promise to support them, conscious that she had not the power to do it. But she hesitated, inclination to serve, the difficulties of doing it, and all that cant of those who with power will not, and those who without power cannot, grant the requested favours." Such interest as she could not make she was willing enough to attempt; but, as a matter of fact, she had no influence whatsoever with her lover, either as Prince of Wales or as King, and it is not on record that during the score of years she was at Court she was ever able to do a "job" for anyone, except perhaps

for her brother Sir John Hobart. He, who had entered Parliament in 1715, had been made six years later a Commissioner of Trade and Plantations, and had been admitted a Knight of the Bath on the revival of that order in 1725. On the accession of George II. he was appointed Treasurer of the Chamber, which post he held for seventeen years; and in 1728 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Hobart, of Blicking, Norfolk. It is always assumed that he owed everything to his sister and, therefore, a little disconcerting to find that the favour he found at Court continued long after her retirement. He was nominated Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk in 1740; five years later he was sworn of the Privy Council; and in 1746 created Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Caroline, having decided that the best way to manage the King was to affect complaisance and obedience to all his humours and actions, adhered throughout her married life strictly to this rule. She might not, then, annoy her consort, but she could at least prevent Mrs. Howard's apartments becoming the avenue to his favour, and, Lord Chesterfield has recorded, "from time to time she made the mistress feel her inferiority by hindering the King from going to her room for three or four days, representing it as the seat of a political faction."* Those who paid court to Mrs. Howard received short shrift at the hands of the Queen, as Swift, Lord Chesterfield, and Lord Bathurst—to name but a few—learnt to their cost. As for Walpole, he did not dislike Mrs. Howard—as has been said he aided her to secure the purchase of certain properties; but he was wise enough to see that it was the Queen who wielded the power, and, therefore, he attached himself to her. When Caroline was dead, and the King was attracted by Madame Walmoden, his attitude changed. "I'll bring Madame Walmoden over, and I'll have nothing to do with your girls," he said cynically. "I was for the wife against the mistress, but I will be for the mistress against the daughters."† But, indeed, the King was little likely to grant any request of Mrs. Howard. Like most weak men, he had a morbid dread lest people should think he was being influenced. He was perfectly well aware that he was governed by the Queen, and that she, in her turn, was governed

* *Works* (ed. Mohun), II. † Hervey: *Memoirs*, III. 351.

JOHN HOBART, FIRST EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
After a portrait by Thomas Hudson.

[*To face p.* 178.

by Walpole; but he kept this knowledge to himself, and believed that no one had discovered it. Indeed, it was his boast that he was master in his kingdom. Needless to say, the exact state of things was widely known, and the whole Court laughed about it behind his royal back. Some amusing lines were written on the subject:

"You may strut, dapper George, but 'twill all be in vain:
We know 'tis Queen Caroline, not you, that reign—
You govern no more than Don Philip of Spain.
Then if you would have us fall down and adore you,
Lock up your fat spouse, as your Dad did before you."

George read the pasquinade, and was furious. He showed it to Lord Scarborough, who admitted he had already seen it, but, when the King asked who had shown it to him, he refused to say, telling his Majesty that he had passed his word of honour, even before reading it, not to mention from whom it came. "Had I been Lord Scarborough in this situation, and you King," said his Majesty wrathfully, "the man would have shot me, or I him, who should have dared to affront me, in the person of my master, by showing me such insolent nonsense." "I never told your Majesty that it was a man," said the Master of the Horse dryly.*

One effort, indeed, George made to be really and truly his own master. When Walpole, after informing him that his father was dead, asked who should draw up the usual Address to the Privy Council, the new King named Sir Spencer Compton. This was equivalent to a declaration that he did not propose to continue Walpole as Prime Minister, and that statesman bowed and departed. This exciting intelligence, of course, spread; and the immediate result was instructive. "The King stayed four days in town, during which period Leicester House, which used to be a desert, was thronged from morning to night, like the 'Change at noon," Lord Hervey has written. "But Sir Robert Walpole walked through these rooms as if they had been still empty; his presence, that used to make a crowd wherever he appeared, now emptied every corner he turned to,

* Hervey: *Memoirs*, I. 94.

and the same people who were officiously a week ago clearing the way to flatter his prosperity, were now getting out of it to avoid sharing his disgrace."* A further light is thrown on the way of the courtiers at this same time by Horace Walpole: "My mother, Sir Spencer [Compton]'s designation, and not its evaporation being known, could not make her way to pay her respects to the King and Queen between the scornful backs and elbows of her late devotees, nor could approach nearer to the Queen than the third or fourth row; but no sooner was she discerned by her Majesty than the Queen cried aloud, 'There I am sure I see a friend!' The torrent divided, and shrank to either side, 'and as I came away,' said my mother, 'I might have walked over their heads if I had pleased.'"† The Ministers expected hourly to be displaced, but nothing happened. Then Compton, who found himself unable to draw up the Address, had to appeal to Walpole, who assisted him. Compton then declared "his incapacity to undertake so arduous a task" as the office of Prime Minister, and Walpole was retained. The King's attempt at self-assertion was a dismal failure and it was never repeated.

* *Memoirs*, I. 37. † *Reminiscences.*

CHAPTER XII

MRS. HOWARD, JOHN GAY, THE DUCHESS OF QUEENSBERRY, DEAN SWIFT AND LADY BETTY GERMAINE

Gay offered the post of Gentleman Usher to the Princess Louisa—His indignant refusal—His disappointment—Pope congratulates him on his withdrawal from Court—Swift shares Gay's indignation—He vents his anger unjustly on Mrs. Howard—Mrs. Howard and Gay remain on excellent terms —*The Beggar's Opera*—The representation of *Polly* prohibited—The Duchess of Queensberry invites George II. to subscribe for a copy of the play—She is forbidden the Court—Her letter to the King—The Duke of Queensberry resigns his places—Gay becomes "one of the obstructions to the peace of Europe"—Arbuthnot's amusing account of the poet in opposition—The correspondence between Mrs. Howard, Gay and the Duchess of Queensberry—The death of Gay—Pope writes his epitaph—He is deeply lamented by Swift—Swift's letter to Mrs. Howard charging her with insincerity—Pope defends her—Letters written by Mrs. Howard and Swift—He voices his grievance to Lady Betty Germaine—She accuses him of unreasonableness—He "cuts short" the controversy—Lady Betty refuses to quarrel with him.

WITH the death of George I. Gay felt that at last the hour had struck when that long-sought "place" would be bestowed upon him. The new Queen did not forget him: she, in the eyes of the poet, did far worse; she offered him the post of Gentleman-Usher to the Princess Louisa,* then a child of two. His disappointment was bitter, but it was as nothing to his indignation. "The Queen's is at last settled," he wrote to Swift, "and in the list I was appointed gentleman-usher to the Princess Louisa, the youngest Princess, which upon account that I am so far advanced in life, I have declined accepting, and have endeavoured in the best manner I could to make my excuses to her Majesty. So now all my expectations are vanished, and I have no prospect but in depending wholly upon myself,

* Louisa (1724-1751), the youngest of George II.'s children. She married in 1743 Frederick, Prince (afterwards King) of Denmark.

and my own conduct. As I am used to disappointments, I can bear them; but as I can have no more hopes, I can no more be disappointed, so that I am in a blessed condition."*

Pope, who asked no man's favour, on hearing the news could not bring himself to express regret. "I have many years ago magnified, in my own mind, and repeated to you, a ninth beatitude, added to the eight in the Scripture: 'Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed,'" he told his brother-poet. "I could find in my heart to congratulate you on this happy dismission from all Court-dependance; I dare say I shall find you the better and the honester man for it many years hence; very probably the healthfuller and the cheerfuller into the bargain. You are happily rid of many cursed ceremonies, as well as of many ill and vicious habits, of which few or no men escape the infection, who are hackneyed and trammelled in the way of a Court. Princes, indeed, and Peers (the lackies of Princes) and Ladies (the fools of Peers) will smile on you the less; but men of worth and real friends will look on you the better. There is a thing, the only thing, which kings and queens cannot give you (for they have it not to give), liberty, and which is worth all they have; which, as I now thank God, Englishmen need not ask from their hands. You will enjoy that, and your own integrity, and the satisfactory consciousness of having *not* merited such graces from Courts as are bestowed only on the mean, servile, flattering, interested and undeserving. The only steps to the favour of the Great are such complacencies, such compliances, such distant decorums, as delude them in their vanities, or engage them in their passions. He is their greatest favourite, who is the falsest; and when a man, by such vile gradations, arrives at the height of grandeur and power, he is then at best but in a circumstance to be hated, and in a condition to be hanged for serving their ends: so many a Minister has found it."† Swift, on the other hand, was very angry that Gay should be so treated, and wrote as if voluntary attendance at Court made it obligatory upon the King and Queen to provide for the courtier:

* October 22, 1727; Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 42.

† October 6, 1717.

"Thus Gay, the hare with many friends,
Twice seven long years the Court attends;
Who, under tales conveying truth,
To virtue form'd a princely youth:
Who paid his courtship with the crowd,
As far as modest pride allow'd;
Rejects a servile usher's place,
*And leaves St. James's in disgrace.**

. . . . . .

"How could you, Gay, disgrace the muse's train,
To serve a tasteless Court twelve years in vain!
Fain would I think our female friend sincere,†
Till Bob‡, the poet's foe, possess'd her ear.
Did female virtue e'er so high ascend,
To lose an inch of favour for a friend?
Say, had the Court no better place to choose
For thee, than make a dry-nurse of thy Muse?
How cheaply had thy liberty been sold,
To squire a royal girl of two years old:
In leading strings her infant steps to guide,
Or with her go-cart amble side by side!"§

It is a little difficult to-day to understand Swift's indignation. Gay had a sinecure of £150 a year; he was offered another of £200 a year—for the post of Gentleman-Usher involved no duties save occasional attendance at Court, and to this the poet had shown himself by no means averse. Besides, it does not seem unfitting that one whose greatest recommendations for Court favour were the "Fables," written for one royal child, should have been offered a sinecure post of attendant about another royal child.

Swift, unable effectively to vent his anger on Caroline, chose to regard Mrs. Howard as the cause of the mortification of his friend. Mrs. Howard, however, not only had nothing to do

* *A Libel on the Rev. Dr. Delany and His Excellency John, Lord Carteret*, written in 1729 (Swift: *Works*, ed. Scott, XIV. 387).

† Mrs. Howard.

‡ Sir Robert Walpole.

§ *An Epistle to Mr. Gay*, written in 1731 (Swift: *Works*, XIV. 261).

with the offer of the place of Gentleman-Usher to Gay, the patronage being directly in the Queen's hands, but, as has been indicated, was unable to secure for him, or any one else, a place at Court of any description. Certainly she was in blissful ignorance of having given offence, for, as Gay wrote to the Dean so late as February 15, 1728, "Mrs. Howard frequently asks after you, and desires her compliments to you;" while as for her poet, she continued to write to him in the usual friendly strain.

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO JOHN GAY

"October, 1727.

"I hear you expect, and have a mind to have, a letter from me; and though I have little to say, I find I don't care that you should be either disappointed or displeased. Tell her Grace [of Queensberry] I don't think she looked kindly upon me when I saw her last: she ought to have looked and thought very kindly, for I am much more her humble servant than those who tell her so every day. Don't let her cheat you in the pencils; she designs to give you nothing but her old ones: I suppose she always uses those worst who love her best, Mrs. Herbert excepted; but I hear she has done handsomely by her. I cannot help doing the woman this justice, that she can now and then distinguish merit.

"So much for her Grace: now for yourself, John. I desire you will mind the main chance, and be in town in time enough to let the opera have play enough for its life, and for your pockets. Your head is your best friend; it would clothe, lodge and wash you; but you neglect it, and follow that false friend, your heart, which is such a foolish tender thing, that it makes others despise your head that have not half so good a one upon their own shoulders; in short, John, you may be a snail, or a silk-worm, but by my consent you shall never be a *hare* again.

"We go to town next week: try your interest, and bring the duchess up by the birth-day. I did not think to have named her any more in this letter; I find I am a little foolish about her: don't you be a great deal so; for if *she* will not come, do you come without her."

The opera to which allusion is made in the above letter is *The Beggar's Opera*, which was produced at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields on the following January 29, and was played for more than sixty nights; the King and Queen, with the elder Princesses, being present at the twenty-first representa-

tion. It made the author famous, and put £800 in his pocket. It had also other and unpleasing consequences. Under a thin disguise, Gay had introduced in the *Opera* Walpole, his wife and his mistress;* and the minister, the least vindictive of men, felt that this was going too far. He bided his time, and when Gay was about to put a sequel, *Polly*, into rehearsal, the Duke of Grafton,† in his office as Lord Chamberlain (acting on Walpole's suggestion) forbade the representation of *Polly*, which had not the merits of the preceding piece, but was entirely innocuous. A battle royal raged around the prohibition.

It could not be performed, but it could be printed, and Gay was advised by his friends to publish it by subscription. The Duchess of Queensberry "touted" for him everywhere, even at Court. The King at a Drawing-room asked what she was doing. "What must be agreeable, I am sure," she replied, "to anyone so humane as your Majesty, for it is an act of charity, and a charity to which I do not despair of bringing your Majesty to contribute." This, of course, was a gratuitous piece of impertinence, for the Lord Chamberlain acts as the official mouthpiece of the Sovereign; and it could not be overlooked. The next day (February 27, 1729), William Stanhope, the Vice-Chamberlain, carried to the Duchess a verbal message not to come to Court; whereupon she sat down and wrote a letter for him to take to his Majesty. "That the Duchess of Queensberry," so ran her reply, "is surprised and well pleased that the King hath given her so agreeable a command as to stay from Court, where she never came for diversion, but to bestow a great civility on the King and Queen; she hopes by such an unprecedented order as this is, that the King will see as few as he wishes at his Court, particularly such as are to think or speak truth. I dare not do otherwise, and ought not, nor could have imagined that it would not have been the very highest compliment that I could possibly pay the King to endeavour to support truth and innocence in his house, particularly when the King and Queen both told me that they had not read Mr. Gay's

* Maria ("Molly") Skerrett, whom Walpole, after the death of his first wife, married in 1738. She died in the following year of a miscarriage.

† Charles Fitzroy, second Duke of Grafton (1683–1757), Lord Chamberlain, 1724–1757.

play. I have certainly done right, then, to stand by my own words rather than his Grace of Grafton's, who hath neither made use of truth, judgment, nor honour, through this whole affair, either for himself or his friends."* Stanhope read this, and begged her to reflect before sending it. She consented to write another letter, did so, and handed it to him. He chose the first.

The Duke of Queensberry supported his wife, and although the King pressed him to remain, resigned his office of Admiral of Scotland—though Gay says, "this he would have done, if the Duchess had not met with this treatment, upon account of ill-usage from the Ministers," and that this incident "hastened him in what he had determined."†

In consequence of this hubbub, Gay became a notorious character; as Arbuthnot in a letter to Swift (March 19, 1729) remarks very humorously, "John Gay, I may say without vanity, owes his life, under God, to the unwearied endeavours and care of your humble servant; for a physician, who had not been passionately his friend, could not have saved him. I had, besides my personal concern for him, other motives of my care. He is now become a public person, a little Sacheverell, and I took the same pleasure in saving him, as Radcliffe did in preserving my Lord Chief Justice Holt's wife, whom he attended out of spite to her husband, who wished her dead. The inoffensive John Gay is now become one of the obstructions to the peace of Europe, the terror of Members, the chief author of the *Craftsman*, and all the seditious pamphlets which have been published against the Government. He has got several turned out of their places; the greatest ornament of the Court [the Duchess of Queensberry] banished from it for his sake; another great lady [Mrs. Howard] in danger of being *chassée* likewise; about seven or eight Duchesses pushing forward, like the ancient circumcelliones in the Church, who shall suffer martyrdom, on his account first. He is the darling of the city. If he should travel about the country he would have hecatombs of roasted oxen sacrificed to him. Since he became so conspicuous, Will Pulteney hangs his head, to see him-

* Hervey: *Memoirs*, I. 123.

† Gay to Swift, March 18, 1729 (Swift: *Works*, ed. Scott, XVII. 228).

CATHERINE HYDE, DUCHESS OF QUEENSBERRY
After a portrait by Charles Jervas.

[*To face p.* 186.

self so outdone in the career of glory. I hope he will get a good deal of money by printing his play [*Polly*]; but I really believe he would get more money by showing his person; and I can assure you, this is the very identical John Gay whom you formerly knew, and lodged with in Whitehall, two years ago."*

All these matters affected not a whit the relations between Mrs. Howard and Gay. When he was at Bath in August, 1728, she wrote to him from Hampton Court: "I have made Mr. ["Beau"] Nash governor to Lord Peterborough, and Lord Peterborough governor to Mr. Pope. If I should come to the Bath, I propose being governess to the Doctor [Arbuthnot] and you. I know you both to be so unruly, that nothing less than Lady P[embroke]'s spirit or mine could keep any authority over you. . . . I have had two letters from Chesterfield, which I wanted you to answer for me; but, upon my word, I have not had one place to dispose of, or you should not be without one." Which gentle raillery was well accepted by the poet.

The correspondence between them continued unabated, and without any change of tone. Sometimes the Duchess of Queensberry and Gay sent her a joint note, as they did to Swift and Pope, and these were always bright, and frequently humorous.

JOHN GAY TO DEAN SWIFT

"Middleton,

"August 9, 1729.

"I desire you would send word whether white currants be proper to make tarts; it is a point that we dispute upon every day, and will never be ended unless you decide it.

"The Duchess will be extremely glad if you could come here this day se'nnight; but if you cannot, come this day fortnight at farthest, and bring as many unlikely people as you can to keep you company. Have you lain at Marble Hill since we left Petersham? Hath the Duchess an aunt Thanet† alive again? She says that there are but two people in the world

* Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott, 1884), XVII. 232.

† The great-aunt (not aunt) was Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Boyle, first Earl of Burlington, who married Nicholas Tufton, third Earl of Thanet. Elizabeth's sister, Henrietta, who married Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, was a grandmother of the Duchess of Queensberry.

that love and fear me—and those are, Lord Drum[lanrig]* and Lord Charles [Douglas].† If they were awake, I would make them love those that I love, and say something civil to you. The Duchess hath left off taking snuff ever since you have; but she takes a little every day. I have not left it off, and yet take none; my resolution not being so strong. Though you are a water-drinker yourself, I dare say you will be sorry to hear that your friends have strictly adhered to that liquor; for you may be sure their heads cannot be affected with that.

"General Dormer‡ refused to eat a wheat-ear, because they call it here a fern-knacker; but since he knew it was a wheat-ear, he is extremely concerned. You are desired to acquaint Miss Smith§ that the Duchess was upon the brink of leaving off painting the first week she came here, but hath since taken it up with great success. She hopes she will never think of her and my Lord Castlemaine‖ of the same day. The Duke hath rung the bell for supper, and says, How can you write such stuff?

"And so we conclude,
As 'tis fitting we should,
For the sake of our food;
So don't think this rude.
Would my name was 'Gertrude,'
Or 'Simon and Jude.'"¶

These folk loved fooling, and frequently indulged in that pleasant pastime.

"Middleton,
"August 27, 1729.

". . . . What is blotted out was nonsense; so that it is not worth while to try to read it. It was well meant: the Duchess said it was very obscure, and I found out that it was not to be understood at all, nor by any alteration to be made intelligible; so out it went.

* Henry Douglas (1723–1754), known by the style of Earl of Drumlanrig, the elder son of Charles Douglas, third Duke of Queensberry. He predeceased his father.

† Lord Charles Douglas (1726–1756), the younger son of the Duke, who also survived him.

‡ James Dormer (1678–1741), Colonel, 1720; Envoy-Extraordinary to Lisbon, 1725; Lieutenant-General, 1737; a friend of Pope.

§ See p. 47.

‖ Sir Richard Child, Bart., of Wanstead (d. 1749), created Viscount Castlemaine, 1718; and Earl Tylney, 1731.

¶ Add. MSS. 22626, f 35.

"We have this afternoon been reading Polybius. We were mightily pleased with the account of the Roman wars with the Gauls; but we did not think his account of the Achaians, and his remarks upon the historian Philarchus, so entertaining as for aught we knew it might be judicious.

"I know you will be very uneasy unless I tell you what picture the Duchess hath in hand. It is a round landscape of Paul Brill, which Mr. Dormer* lent her, in which there are figures very neatly finished. It is larger than any she hath yet done; by the dead colouring I guess (though her Grace is not very sanguine) it will in the end turn out very well.

"J. G."

"I do not understand which of our correspondents this letter is fit for; for there is neither wit, folly, nor solid sense, nor even a good foundation for nonsense, which is the only thing that I am well versed in. There were all these good things in the delightful letter you sent us; but as all the different hands are not known, they are unanswerable: for the future, then, pray sign or come,—the latter is best; for whoever can write so well must speak so; but now I think we had better always write for the good of posterity.

"C. Q."†

Gay's letters to Mrs. Howard were often delightful reading, especially when he had nothing in particular to say, or when he was able to poke kindly fun at his hostess and protectress.

"May 9, 1730.

"It is what the Duchess never would tell me—so that it is impossible for me to tell you—*how she does;* but I cannot take it ill, for I really believe it is what she never really and truly did to any body in her life. As I am no physician and cannot do her any good, one would wonder how she could refuse to answer this question out of common civility; but she is a professed hater of common civility, and so I am determined never to ask her again. If you have a mind to know what she hath done since she came here, the most material things that I know of are, that she hath worked a rose, and milked a cow, and those two things I assure you are of more consequence, I verily believe, than hath been done by any body else.

"Mrs. Herbert was very angry with her Grace the night before she left the town, that she could part with her friends with such an indecent cheerfulness; she wishes she had seen

* Mr. Dormer, of Rowsham, elder brother of General Dormer.

† Add. MSS. 22626, f. 37.

you at the same time, that she might have known whether she could have carried this happy indifference through, or no. She is grown a great admirer of two characters in Prior's Poems, that of 'Sauntering Jack and Idle Joan';* and she thinks them persons worthy imitation: at this very instant she herself is in their way. She had a mind to write to you, but cannot prevail with herself to set about it; she is now thinking of Mrs. Herbert, but is too indolent to tell me to make her compliments to her. Just this minute she is wishing you were in this very room; but she will not give herself the trouble to say so to me: all that I know of it is, she looks all this, for she knows I am writing to you.

"There is, indeed, a very good reason for her present indolence, for she is looking upon a book which she seems to be reading; but I believe the same page hath lain open before her ever since I began this letter. Just this moment she hath uttered these words: 'that she will take it as a very great favour if you will speak to Mrs. Herbert to speak to Lord Herbert, that he would speak to any body who may chance to go by Mr. Nix's house, to call upon him to hasten his sending the piece of furniture, which, perhaps as soon as she receives it, may tempt her to write to somebody or other that very little expects it;'—for she loves to do things by surprise. She would take it kindly if you write to her against this thing comes here; for I verily believe she will try whether or no it be convenient for writing, and perhaps she may make the trial to you; she did not bid me say this, but as she talks of you often, I think you have a fair chance.

"As soon as you are settled at Marble Hill, I beg you will take the widow's house for me, and persuade the Duchess to come to Petersham. But, wherever you are, at present I can only wish to be with you: do what you can for me, and let me hear from you till the Duchess writes to you. You may write to me, and if you express any resentment against her for not writing, I will let her know it in what manner you shall please to direct me."†

The Duchess did at last rouse herself to write, and after a reply from Mrs. Howard at Hampton Court came another joint letter.

* "*Neither good nor bad, nor fool nor wise,*
They would not learn nor could advise:
Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,
They led a kind of — as it were;
Nor wish'd nor cared, nor laugh'd nor cried:
And so they lived, and so they died."

† Add. MSS. 22626, f. 42.

" Amesbury,
" August 20, 1730.

" The Duchess says she cannot say a word more, if I would give her the world, and that her misery hath got the better of her pleasure in writing to you. She thanks you for your information, and says, that if she can bear herself, or think that any body else can, she intends to make her visit next week. Now it is my opinion that she need never have any scruples of this kind ; but as to herself, you know she hath often an unaccountable way of thinking, and, say what you will to her, she will now and then hear you, but she will always think and act for herself. I have been waiting three or four minutes for what she hath to say, and at last she tells me she cannot speak one word more, and at the same time is so very unreasonable as to desire you would write her a long letter, as she knows you love it.

" I have several complaints to make to you of her treatment, but I shall only mention the most barbarous of them. She hath absolutely forbid her dog to be fond of me, and takes all occasions to snub her if she shows me the least civility. How do you think Lord Herbert would take such usage from you, or any lady in Christendom ?

" Now she says, I must write you a long letter ; but to be sure I cannot say what I would about her, because she is looking over me as I write. If I should tell any good of her, I know she would not like it ; and I have said my worst of her already.

" J. G."

" Do not think I am lazy, and so have framed an excuse, for I am really in pain (at some moments intolerable since this was begun). I think often I could be mighty glad to see you ; and though you deserve vastly, that is saying much from me (for I can bear to be alone) and upon all accounts think I am much better here than any where else. I think to go on and prosper mighty prettily here, and like the habitation so well (that if I could in nature otherwise be forgetful) that would put me in mind of what I owe to those who helped me on to where I wished to be sooner than I feared I could be. Pray tell Miss Meadows that I was in hopes she would have made a dutiful visit to her father. If any one else care for my respects, they may accept of them. I will present them to Lord Herbert, whether he care or not. I hope by this time he is able to carry himself and Fop wherever he pleases. If I had the same power over you, I would not write you word

that I am yours, etc.; but since I can only write, believe that I am to you every thing that you have ever read at the bottom of a letter, but not that I am so only by way of conclusion.

"C. Q."*

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO JOHN GAY

"October 3, 1730.

"I hear you have had a house full of courtiers, and, what is more extraordinary, they were honest people; but I will take care, agreeably to your desire, that you shall not increase the number. I wish I could as easily gratify you in your other request about a certain person [the Duchess of Queensberry]'s health; but indeed, John, that is not in my power. I have often thought it proceeds from thinking better of herself than she does of any body else; for she has always confidence to inquire after those she calls friends, and enough assurance to give them advice; at the same time, she will not answer a civil question about herself, and would certainly never follow any advice that was given her: you plainly see she neither thinks well of their heart or their head. I believe I have told you as much before; but a settled opinion of any thing will naturally lead one into the same manner of expressing one's thoughts."

The last letter of the correspondence is from Mrs. Howard (then Lady Suffolk), and bears the date, Kensington, September 5, 1731. A little more than a year later, on December 4, 1732, the poet died at the Duke of Queensberry's house in Burlington Gardens.

Rarely has there been a man more beloved than Gay. "I shall never see you again, I believe; one of your principal calls to England is at an end," Pope said to Swift, December 5, in a letter conveying the sad tidings. "Indeed, he was the most amiable by far, his qualities were the gentlest; but I love you as well and as firmly. Would to God the man we had lost had not been so amiable nor so good; but that's a wish for our own sakes, not for his. Sure, if innocence and integrity can deserve happiness, it must be his."† This letter was found among Swift's papers, endorsed: "On my dear friend Mr. Gay's death. Received December 15th, but not read till the 20th, by an impulse foreboding some misfortune."

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 45. † Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 53.

No one regretted his loss more than the Duchess of Queensberry. "I often want poor Mr. Gay, and on this occasion extremely," she wrote to Mrs. Howard, September 28, 1734, nearly two years after the death of her *protégé*. "Nothing evaporates sooner than joy untold, or even told, unless to one so entirely in your interest as he was, who bore at least an equal share in every satisfaction or dissatisfaction which attended us. I am not in the spleen, though I write thus; on the contrary, it is a sort of pleasure to think over his good qualities: his loss was really great, but it is a satisfaction to have once known so good a man. As you were as much his friend as I, it is needless to ask your pardon for dwelling so long on this subject."*

Gay was buried in Westminster Abbey. His epitaph was written by Pope:

> *"Of manners gentle, of affections mild;*
> *In wit, a man; simplicity, a child;*
> *With native humour temp'ring virtuous rage,*
> *Form'd to delight at once and last the age:*
> *Above temptation, in a low estate,*
> *And uncorrupted, ev'n among the great:*
> *A safe companion, and an easy friend,*
> *Unblam'd thro' life, lamented in thy end.*
> *These are thy honours! not that here thy bust*
> *Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;*
> *But that the worthy and the good shall say,*
> *Striking their pensive bosoms—*HERE *lies Gay."*

Swift's anger at the offer of only a minor post to Gay was not mitigated by the fact that he received no preferment, and he blamed Mrs. Howard as much in the one case as in the other. He received little sympathy, however, when he complained of her. "I desire my humble service to Lord Oxford, Lord Bathurst, and particularly to Miss Blount, but to no lady at Court. God bless you for being a greater dupe than I. I love that character too myself, but I want your charity," he wrote to Pope, August 11, 1729; but Pope replied (October 9), "The Court

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 73.

lady I have a good opinion of. Yet I have treated her more negligently than you would do, because you will like to see the inside of a Court, which I do not . . . after all, that lady means to do good, and does no harm, which is a vast deal for a courtier." Though, at the time of the trouble about his play, *Polly*, Gay wrote to Swift, " Mrs. Howard has declared herself strongly, both to the King and Queen, as my advocate," the Dean continued so persistently to urge that the poet ought to feel himself the victim of Mrs. Howard's insincerity that at last Gay was provoked to beg him to desist :

" July 18, 1731.

" Your friend Mrs. Howard is now Countess of Suffolk. I am still so much a dupe that I think you mistake her. Come to Amesbury, and you and I will dispute this matter, and the Duchess [of Queensberry] shall be judge. But I fancy you will object against her ; for I will be so fair as to own that I think she is on my side ; but, in short, you shall choose any impartial referee you please. I have heard from her ; Mr. Pope has seen her. I beg that you would suspend your judgment till we talk over this affair together ; for, I fancy, by your letter, you have neither heard from her, or seen her ; so that you cannot at present be as good a judge as we are. I will be a dupe for you at any time. Therefore I beg of you that you would let me be a dupe in quiet."

Swift did not directly attack Mrs. Howard until 1730, and then he wrote under the mistaken impression that she had retired from Court.

" Dublin,
" November 21, 1730.

" I do not now pity the leisure you have to read a letter from me, and this letter shall be a history.

" First, therefore, I call you to witness that I did not attend on the queen till I had received her own repeated messages, which, of course, occasioned my being introduced to you. I never asked anything till, upon leaving England for the first time, I desired from you a present worth a guinea, and from her Majesty one [a medal] worth ten pounds, by way of a memorial. Yours [the ring] I received, and the Queen upon taking my leave of her, made an excuse that she had intended a medal for me, which not being ready, she would send it me the Christmas following : yet this was never done, nor at all remembered when I went back to England the next year, and attended her, as I had done before. I must now tell you Madam, that I will

receive no medal from her Majesty, nor any thing less than her picture at half length, drawn by Jervas ; and if he takes it from another original, the Queen shall sit at least twice for him to touch it up. I desire you will let her Majesty know this in plain words, although I have heard that I am under her displeasure. But this is a usual thing with Princes, as well as Ministers, upon every false representation ; and so I took occasion to tell the Queen, upon the quarrel Mr. Walpole had with our friend Gay,* the first time I ever had the honour to attend her.

" Against *you* I have but one reproach, that when I was last in England, and just after the present King's accession, I resolved to pass that summer in France, for which I had then a most lucky opportunity, from which those who seemed to love me well dissuaded me by your advice. And when I sent you a note, conjuring you to lay aside the character of a courtier and a favourite upon that occasion, your answer positively directed me not to go in that juncture ; and you said the same thing to my friends who seemed to have power of giving me hints, that I might reasonably expect a settlement in England, which, God knows, was no very great ambition, considering the station I should leave here, of greater dignity, and which might easily have been managed to be disposed of as the crown pleased. If these hints came from you, I affirmed you thus acted too much like a courtier. But I forgive you, and esteem you as much as ever. You had your reasons, which I shall not inquire into ; because I always believed you had some virtues, besides all the accomplishment of mind and person that can adorn a lady.

" I am angry with the Queen for sacrificing my friend Gay to the mistaken piques of Sir Robert Walpole, about a libel written against him, although he were convinced at the same time of Mr. Gay's innocence, and although, as I said before, I told her Majesty the whole story. Mr. Gay deserved better treatment amongst you upon all accounts, and particularly for his excellent unregarded ' Fables,' dedicated to Prince William, which I hope his Royal Highness will often read for his instruction.

" I wish her Majesty would a little remember what I largely said to her about Ireland, when before a witness she gave me leave, and commanded me to tell here, what she spoke to me upon that subject, and ordered me, if I lived to see her in her present station, to send her our grievances, promising to read my letter, and do all good offices in her power for this most miserable and most loyal kingdom, now at the brink of ruin, and never so near as now.

" As to myself, I repeat again, that I never asked any thing more than a trifle, as a memorial of some distinction which her

* Presumably about Gay's play *Polly*. See p. 185.

Majesty graciously seemed to make between me and every common clergyman. But that trifle was forgot, according to the usual method of princes, although I was taught to think myself upon a foot of pretending to some little exception.

"As to yourself, Madam, I most heartily congratulate with you, for being delivered from the toil, the envy, the slavery, and vexation of a favourite, where you could not always answer the good intentions that I hope you had. You will now be less teased with solicitations, one of the greatest evils in life. You possess an easy employment, with quiet of mind, although it be by no means equal to your merit; and if it shall please God to establish your health, I believe and hope you are too wise to hope for more. Mr. Pope hath been always an advocate for your sincerity; and even in the character I gave of yourself, allowed you as much of that virtue as could be expected in a lady, a courtier, and a favourite. Yet I confess I never heartily pledged your health as a toast upon any other regards than beauty, wit, good sense, and an unblemished character. For as to friendship, truth, sincerity, and other trifles of that kind, I never concerned myself about them, because I knew them to be only parts of the lower morals which are always useless at court. I am content that you should tell the Queen what I have said of her, and in my own words, if you please. I could have been a better prophet in the character I gave you of yourself, if it had been good manners in the height of your credit to put you in mind of its mortality; for you are not the first by at least three ladies whom I have known to undergo the same turn of fortune. It is allowed that ladies are often very good scaffoldings; and I need not tell you the use that scaffoldings are put to by all builders, as well political as mechanical.

"I should have begun this letter by telling you that I was encouraged to write by my best friend [Pope] and one of your great admirers, who told me, that from something which had passed between you he thought you would not receive it ill. After all, I know no person of your sex for whom I have so great an esteem as I do and believe shall always continue to bear for you,—I mean private person, for I must except the Queen; and it is not an exception of form, because I have really a great veneration for her great qualities, although I have reason to complain of her conduct to me, which I could not excuse, although she had fifty kingdoms to govern. I have but room to conclude with my sincere professions of being, with true respect, etc.

"Jonath. Swift."*

To this letter Mrs. Howard made no reply. Croker says,

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 20.

" she could scarcely have answered it, for it was founded on a supposed alteration of her circumstances at Court, which she could not decently have either admitted or denied;"* but, of course, it would have been easy enough for her to write concerning the contentions set forth. Swift returned to the attack on July 27, 1731, when, on the pretext of congratulating her on becoming a Countess, in a long letter he repeated what he had said in November. This drew from Lady Suffolk a vigorous reply:

" Hampton Court,
" September, 1731.

" You seem to think that you have a natural right to accuse me because I am a woman and a courtier. I have taken it as a woman and a courtier ought, with great resentment, and a determined resolution of revenge. The number of letters that have been sent, and thought by many to be yours (and thank God they were all silly ones), has been a fair field to execute it. Think of my joy to hear you suspected of folly; think of my pleasure when I entered the list for your justification! Indeed, I was a little disconcerted to find Mr. Pope took the same side; for I would have had the man of wit, the dignified divine, the Irish Drapier, have found no friend but the silly woman and the courtier. Could I have preserved myself alone in the list, I should not have despaired that this monitor of princes, this Irish patriot, this excellent man at speech and pen, should have closed the scene under suspicion of having a violent passion for Mrs. Barber;† and Lady M——‡ or Mrs. Heywood§ have writ the progress of it. Now, to my mortification, I find everybody inclined to think you had no hand in writing these letters; but I every day thank Providence that there is an epitaph [on the Duke of Schomberg] in St. Patrick's Cathedral, that will be a last monument of your imprudence.‖ I cherish this extremely;

* *Suffolk Correspondence*, II. 11.

† Mary Barber (1690?–1757), a minor poet, patronized by Swift.

‡ Croker, in the *Suffolk Correspondence* (II. 29), suggests that Lady M—— is Lady Masham, with whom Swift was on intimate terms; Sir Walter Scott, in his edition of Swift's Works, suggests Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

§ Mrs. Eliza Heywood (1693?–1756), a scandalous writer of the day, pilloried in the *Dunciad*.

‖ The inscription on the tomb runs: " The Dean and Chapter of this Church again and again besought the heirs of the Duke to cause some monument to be erected to his memory. But when, after many entreaties by letters and friends, they found that they could not obtain this request, they themselves placed this stone, only that the indignant reader may know where the ashes of Schomberg are deposited."

for, say what you can to justify it, I am convinced *I* shall as easily argue the world into the belief of a courtier's sincerity, as you (with all your wit and eloquence) will be able to convince mankind of the precedence of that action.

" I expect to hear if peace shall ensue, or war continue between us. If I know but little of the art of war, yet you see I do not want courage, and that has made many an ignorant soldier fight successfully. Besides, I have a numerous body of light-armed troops to bring into the field, who, when single, may be as inconsiderable as a Lilliputian, yet ten thousand of them embarrassed Captain Gulliver. If you send honourable articles, they shall be signed. I insist that you own that you have been unjust to me ; for I have never forgot you ; for I have made others send my compliments, because I was not able to write myself. If I cannot justify the advice I gave you, from the success of it, I gave you my reasons for it : and it was your business to have judged of my capacity, by the solidity of my arguments. If the principle was false you ought not to have acted upon it. So you have been only the dupe of your own ill-judgment, and not my falsehood. Am I to send back the crown and the plaid well packed in *my own Character ?** or am I to follow my own inclination, and continue very truly, and very much, your humble servant,

" H. Suffolk."†

Dean Swift to the Countess of Suffolk

" October 26, 1731.

" Your Ladyship's letter made me a little grave ; and in going to answer it, I was in great danger of leaning on my elbow (I mean my left elbow), to consider what I should write, which posture I never used except when I was under a necessity of writing to fools, or lawyers, or ministers of state, where I am to consider what is to be said. But as I write to a person whom I esteem, I am in no pain at all.

" It would be an injury to you or Mr. Pope to give thanks to either of you for justifying me about those letters sent to the Queen, because to think me guilty would disgrace your understandings ; and as he is my best friend, so your ladyship owes me no malice, except that of raillery, and good raillery is always sincere. And if her Majesty were deceived, it would lessen my opinion of her judgment, which would no otherwise affect me

* The " Character " is printed on p. 153 of this work.

† Swift : *Works* (ed. Scott, 1884), XVII. 391.

than by making me sorry upon her own account. But what your Ladyship would have me discover through all your refined civilities, is my great imprudence in ordering that monument to be fixed in my cathedral. I shall not trouble you with a long story. But if ever a numerous, venerable body of dignified clergymen had reason to complain of the highest repeated dignity, in return of the greatest honour offered by them to persons they were wholly strangers to, then my chapter is not to be blamed, nor I who proposed the matter to them; which, however, I could have done by my own authority, but rather chose it should be the work of us all; and I will confess it was upon their advice that I omitted the only two passages which had much bitterness in them, and which a bishop here, one after your own heart, blamed me very much for leaving out, declaring that the treatment given us by the Schomberg family deserved a great deal worse.

"Indeed, madam, I shall not attempt to convince England of anything that relates to this kingdom. The Drapier whom you mention could not do it in relation to the halfpence; neither can the parliament here convince you that we ought not to be put in so miserable condition in every article of distress. Why should the Schomberg family be so uneasy at a thing they were so long warned of, and were told they might prevent for fifty pounds? But here I wish your Ladyship would put the Queen in mind of what passed between her Majesty and me upon the subject of Ireland, when she appeared so much to pity this distressed kingdom, and gave me leave to write to her, if ever I lived to see her Queen; that she would answer my letter, and promised that in such a case she would use all her credit to relieve us; whereupon I desired Dr. Arbuthnot, who was present, to be witness of what she said, and her Majesty confirmed it. I will not ask what the event hath been. If any state-scribble written here should happen to reach London, I entreat your Ladyship would continue to do me the justice of believing my innocence; because I lately assured the Duke of Dorset* that I never would have a hand in any such thing; and I gave him my reason before his secretary, that looking upon this kingdom's condition as absolutely desperate, I would not prescribe a dose to the dead.

"Some parts of your letter I do not understand. Mrs. Barber was recommended to me by Dr. Delany,† who is now in

* The Duke of Dorset (see p. 12, *note*) was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, 1730–1737.

† The Rev. Patrick Delany, D.D. (1685–1768), incumbent of St. John's, October, 1725; Chancellor of Christ's Church, 1727; Chancellor of St. Patrick's, 1730; Dean of Down, 1744. The (second) husband of Mary Delany, and the friend of Swift.

London, and whom I once presented to you at Marble Hill. She seems to be a woman of piety, and a poetical genius; and though I never visited her in my life, yet I was disposed to do her good offices on the doctor's account, and her own good character. By Lady M—— I cannot guess whom you mean: Mrs. Heywood I have heard of as a stupid, infamous, scribbling woman, but have not seen any of her productions. And now, Madam, I utterly acquit your Ladyship of all things that may regard me, except your good opinion, and that very little share I can pretend to in your memory. I never knew a lady who had so many qualities to beget esteem; but how you act as a friend is out of my way to judge.

"As to the Queen, whom I never offended, since it would be presumption to imagine I ever voluntarily came into her thoughts, so it must be a mortification to think, when I happen to be named in her presence, it is usually to my disadvantage. I remember to have once told her Majesty how hard a thing it was, that when a Prince or great Minister hath received an ill impression of any person, although from the most false information, although the Prince were demonstrably convinced of the person's innocence, yet the impression still continued; and her Majesty readily condemned the severity of such a proceeding. I had said the same thing before to Sir Robert Walpole, who, upon reporting it to others, was pleased to give it a turn that I did not deserve.

"I remember the plaid, but I forget the crown [of Lilliput], and the meaning of it. If you had thought fit to have sent me as much of the plaid as would have made me a morning cap, before it fell to the share of the lowest of your women, I should have been proud that my head should have worn your livery; but if you are weary of your *character* it must lie upon my head, for I know no other whom it will fit. And if your Ladyship will not allow it to be a character, I am sure it may pass for a prediction. If you should put the same fancy into the Queen's head, I must send her a much larger character, and in royal paper, otherwise she will not be able to seize the handle in it.

"I fear so long a letter is beyond your mercy to forgive. But your Ladyship is sure to be easy till Mr. Pope shall tell me that you are content to receive another. I shall be heartily sorry if your increase in honour and employment hath not been accompanied with increase of health. Let Mr. Pope in all his letters give me a particular account on this head, and pray God I may never have the least motive to pity you. For as a courtier I forgive you *came endurcie* (which I once charged on my Lord Chesterfield, and he did not deny it). And you have not a favourite or flatterer who makes more outward offers of wishes

for your ease and happiness, than I do from prayers from the bottom of my heart, which proceed entirely from that real respect and esteem wherewith I am, etc.,

" Jonath. Swift."*

This was the last communication which passed between Swift and Lady Suffolk; but in this matter he was perverse, and would not let it rest. Lady Suffolk tacitly declining to continue the correspondence, he voiced his grievance to his old friend Lady Betty Germaine, who, however, gave him scant encouragement.

Lady Betty Germaine to Dean Swift

" November 7, 1732.

" I am sorry to find our tastes so different in the same person; and as everybody has a natural partiality to their own opinion, so it is surprising to me to find Lady Suffolk dwindled in yours, who rises infinitely in mine the more and the longer I know her. But you say, ' you will say no more of Courts, for fear of growing angry; ' and, indeed, I think you are so already, since you level all without knowing them, and seem to think that no one who belongs to a Court can act right. I am sure this cannot be really and truly your sense, because it is unjust; and if it is, I shall suspect there is something of your old maxim in it (which I ever admired and found true) that you must have offended them, because you do not forgive."†

Dean Swift to Lady Betty Germaine

" January 8, 1733.‡

" Although I have but just received the honour of your Ladyship's letter, yet, as things stand, I am determined, against my usual practice, to give you no respite, but to answer it immediately, because you have provoked me with your Lady Suffolk.

" It is six years last spring since I first went to visit my friends in England, after the Queen's death. Her present

* Add. MSS. 22625, f. 24.

† Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 50.

‡ From the references in the present tense to Gay, it is evident that this letter was written before December 20, 1732, on which day Swift opened Pope's letter conveying the tidings of Gay's death (see p. 192). Indeed, Swift says he wrote it on receipt of Lady Betty's letter of November 7. Probably January 8, 1733, is the date on which it was sent.

Majesty heard of my arrival, and sent at least nine times to command my attendance before I would obey her, for several reasons not hard to guess; and, among others, because I had heard her character, from those who knew her well. At last I went, and she received me very graciously. I told her the first time, 'That I was informed she loved to see odd persons; and that having sent for a wild boy from Germany,* she had a curiosity to see a wild dean from Ireland.' I was not much struck with the honour of being sent for, because I knew the same distinction had been offered to others, with whom it would not give me much pride to be compared. I never went once but upon command; and Mrs. Howard, now Lady Suffolk, was usually the person who sent for me, both at Leicester-house and Richmond. Mr. Pope (with whom I lived) and Mr. Gay were then great favourites of Mrs. Howard; especially the latter, who was then one of her led-captains. He had written a very ingenious book of Fables, for the use of her [the Queen's] younger son, and she often promised to provide for him. But some time before, there came out a libel against Mr. Walpole, who was informed it was written by Mr. Gay; and although Mr. Walpole owned he was convinced that it was not written by Gay, yet he never would pardon him, but did him a hundred ill offices to the Princess. Walpole was at that time very civil to me, and so were all the people in power. He invited me and some of my friends to dine with him at Chelsea. After dinner, I took an occasion to say what I had observed of princes and great ministers, 'That if they heard an ill thing of a private person, who expected some favour, although they were afterward convinced that the person was innocent, yet they would never be reconciled.' Mr. Walpole knew well enough that I meant Mr. Gay. I afterward said the same thing to the Princess, with the same intention, and she confessed it a great injustice. But Mr. Walpole gave it another turn; for he said to some of his friends, and particularly to a lord, a near relation of yours, 'That I had dined with him, and had been making apologies for myself;' it seems for my conduct in her late Majesty's reign, in which no man was more innocent, and particularly more officious to do good offices to many of that party which was then out of power, as it is well known.

"Mrs. Howard was then in great favour, and openly protected

* Peter the Wild Boy (1712–1785), a *protégé* of George I., who, in 1725, was found in the woods near Hamelin, in Hanover, "climbing trees like a squirrel," and in the next year was brought to England. He was the subject of a squib, probably written by Swift and Arbuthnot, entitled, "The Most Wonderful Wonder that ever appeared in the Wonder of the British Nation" (1726).

Mr. Gay; at least she saw him often, and professed herself his friend. But Mr. Walpole could scarcely be persuaded to let him hold a poor little office for a second year, of Commissioner to a lottery. When I took my leave of her Highness, on coming hither, she was very gracious; told me 'the medals she had promised me were not ready, but she would send them to me.' However, by her commands, I sent her some plaids for herself and the Princesses, and was too gallant to hear of any offers of payment. Next spring I came again to England; was received the same way; and as I had many hints given me that the Court at Leicester-fields would endeavour to settle me in England (which I did not much regard) the late King died. I went, by Mrs. Howard's orders, to kiss their new Majesties' hands, and was particularly distinguished by the Queen. In a few weeks, the Queen said to Mrs. Howard (alluding to one of Mr. Gay's fables), 'that she would take up the Hare;' and bade her to put her in mind, in settling the family, to find some employment for Mr. Gay; but, in the event, it proved only an offer to be a Gentleman Usher to a girl of two years old, which all his friends (and I among the rest) advised him not to accept; and accordingly he excused himself with the utmost respect. This I and everybody else were sure must have been a management of Mr. Walpole.

"As to myself, in a few weeks after the King's death, I found myself not well, and was resolved to take a step to Paris for my health, having an opportunity of doing it with some advantages and recommendations. But my friends advised me first to consult Mrs. Howard, because, as they knew less of Courts than I, they were strongly possessed that the promise made me might succeed, since a change was all I desired. I wrote to her for her opinion, and particularly conjured her, 'since I had long done with Courts, not to use me like a Courtier, but give me her sincere advice;' which she did, both in a letter and to some friends. It was, 'by all means not to go: it would look singular, and perhaps disaffected;' and to my friends enlarged upon the good intentions of the Court toward me. I stayed; my health grew worse; I left Mr. Pope's house, went to a private lodging near Hammersmith, and, continuing ill, I wrote to Mrs. Howard, with my duty to the Queen, took coach for Chester, recovered in my journey, and came over hither; where, although I have ever since lived in obscurity, yet I have the misfortune, without any grounds, except misinformation, to lie under her Majesty's displeasure, as I have been assured by more than two honourable persons of both sexes; and Mr. Gay is in the same condition.

"For these reasons, as I did always, so I do still, think Mrs.

Howard (now my Lady Suffolk) to be an absolute courtier. Let her show you the 'Character' I wrote of her, and whereof no one else has a copy; and I take Mr. Pope and Mr. Gay, who judge more favourably, to be a couple of simpletons.

"In my answer to the last letter which my Lady Suffolk honoured me with, I did, with great civility, discharge her from ever giving herself another trouble of that kind. I have a great esteem for her good sense and taste. She would be an ornament to any Court; and I do not in the least pity her for not being a female minister, which I never looked on as an advantageous character to a great and wise lady; of which I could easily produce instances. Mr. Pope, besides his natural and acquired talents, is a gentleman of very extraordinary candour, and is consequently apt to be too great a believer of assurances, promises, professions, encouragements, and the like words of course. He asks nothing; and thinks, like a philosopher, that he wants nothing. Mr. Gay is in all regards as honest and sincere a man as ever I knew; whereof neither princes nor ministers are either able to judge or inclined to encourage: which, however, I do not take for so high a breach of politics as they usually suppose. For, however insignificant wit, learning, and virtue may be thought in the world, it perhaps would do government no hurt to have a little of them on its side.

"If you have gone thus far in reading, you are not so wise as I thought you to be. But I will never offend again with so much length. I write only to justify myself. I know you have been always a zealous Whig, and so am I to this day; but nature has not given you leave to be virulent. As to myself, I am of the old Whig principles, without the modern articles and refinements."*

Lady Betty Germaine to Dean Swift

"February 8, 1733.

"I received yours of January 8th but last week, so find it has lain long on the road after the date. It was brought me while at dinner; that very lady sitting close to me whom you seem to think such an absolute courtier.† She knew your hand, and inquired much after you, as she always does; but I, finding her name frequently mentioned, not with that kindness I am sure she deserves, put it into my pocket with silence and surprise. Indeed, were it in people's power that live in a Court with the appearance of favour, to do all they desire for their friends, they might deserve their anger, and be blamed, when it does not happen right to their minds; but that, I believe, never was the

* Swift *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 60. † Lady Suffolk.

case of any one: and in this particular of Mr. Gay, thus far I know, and so far I will answer for, that she was under very great concern that nothing better could be got for him; and the friendship upon all other occasions in her own power, that she showed him, did not look like a double-dealer.

"As to that part concerning yourself and her, I suppose it is my want of comprehension that I cannot find out why she was to blame to give you advice when you asked it, which had all the appearance of sincerity, good-nature and right judgment. And if, after that, the Court did not do what you wanted, and she both believed and wished they would, was it her fault? At least, I cannot find out that you have hitherto proved it upon her. And though you say, you lamented the hour you had seen her, yet I cannot tell how to suppose that your good sense and justice can impute anything to her, because it did not fall out just as she endeavoured and hoped it would.

"As to your creed in politics, I will heartily and sincerely subscribe to it; that I detest avarice in courts—corruption in ministers—schisms in religion—illiterate fawning betrayers of the church in mitres; but at the same time, I prodigiously want an infallible judge to determine when it is really so; for, as I have lived long in the world, and seen many changes, I know those *out* of power and place always see the faults of those who are *in*, with dreadful large spectacles; and I dare say, you knew many instances of it in Lord Oxford's time. But the strongest in my memory is Sir Robert Walpole being first pulled to pieces in the year 1720, because the South Sea did not rise high enough; and since that he has been to the full as well banged about because it did rise too high. So experience has taught me how wrong, unjust, and senseless party factions are; therefore I am determined never wholly to believe any side or party against the other: and, to show that I will not, as my friends are in and out of all sides, so my house receives them all together, and people meet here that would fight in any other place. Those of them that have great and good qualities and virtues I love and admire, in which number is Lady Suffolk; and I do like and love her because I believe, and, as far as I am capable of judging, know her to be a wise, discreet, honest and sincere courtier, who will promise no farther than she can perform, and will always perform what she does promise; so now you have my creed as to her."*

"There has been a strong controversy betwixt me and Lady Elizabeth Germaine on the subject of Lady Suffolk's sincerity

* Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 74.

with regard to our deceased friend, and myself; for you are out of the case, who ask nothing and despise everything that a Court has to give. But I lately cut that dispute short, and by that means shall probably lose Lady Elizabeth's favour," Swift wrote to Pope on the following March 31; but Lady Betty, having effectively made her protest, declined to quarrel. "I cannot possibly, according to your own just rule, be angry, because I am in the right," she replied on May 1 to the letter, which unhappily has not been preserved. "It is you ought to be angry, and never forgive her, because you have been so much in the wrong as to condemn her without the show of justice."

CHAPTER XIII

MRS. HOWARD (NOW LADY SUFFOLK) TAKES A HOLIDAY

August–October, 1734

Mrs. Howard never really happy at Court—The Princess of Wales's treatment of her—A point of etiquette causes a temporary breach—Lady Masham sets down the duties of the Ladies and Women of the Queen's Bedchamber —George II. wearies of his mistress—Mrs. Howard begins to think of retiring from Court—She confides in Lady Hervey—Howard succeeds to the Earldom of Suffolk—Lady Suffolk appointed Groom of the Stole to Her Majesty—The duties and honours of that place—Lady Suffolk still lives at St. James's—She informs Gay of her promotion—His reply—Lady Suffolk's interest with the King suffers further decline—Death of Lord Suffolk—Her ill-health—An operation performed by Cheselden—A curious story—The Hon. George Berkeley—His family—His career—His friends—Lady Suffolk and the Hon. George Berkeley—Letters exchanged between them in the early summer of 1734—Lady Suffolk at Bath—Lord Chesterfield's amusing chronicle of events at the Spa.

THOUGH fairly contented with her lot while her dear friends, Mary Lepell and Mary Bellenden, were at St. James's, it is doubtful if Mrs. Howard was at any time really happy at Court. Certainly her situation was not more agreeable after she became the Prince's mistress, and even so early as the winter of 1720 Mary Bellenden, just married to Colonel Campbell, who was deep in her confidence, wrote, " My dear Howard, God bless you, and send you health and *liberty*."* There is no doubt that the Princess, who, *au fond*, was a very human creature, did not always make things so pleasant for her Woman of the Bedchamber as she might have done—which, indeed, is not surprising. " Till she became Countess of Suffolk, Mrs. Howard constantly dressed the Queen's head, who delighted in subjecting her to such servile treatment,"† Horace Walpole has written. Caroline is not to be commended for her complaisance, nor Mrs. Howard on her morality ; but, given the position, it is very much to the credit of both women that, in the trying circumstances,

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 89.

† *Reminiscences*, CXXXV.

during the twenty years of daily intercourse, they never fell foul of each other.

Once, indeed, but once only, was there trouble between them. "After all this matter [with her husband] was settled [at the beginning of the new reign]," the Queen told Lord Hervey long afterwards, "the first thing this wise, prudent Mrs. Howard did, was to pick a quarrel with me about holding a basin in the ceremony of my dressing, and to tell me, with her little fierce eyes and cheeks as red as your coat, that positively she would not do it; to which I made her no answer then in anger, but calmly, as I would have said to a naughty child, 'Yes, my dear Howard, I am sure you will; indeed you will. Go, go, fie for shame! Go, my good Howard; we will talk of this another time.' About a week after, when, upon maturer deliberation, she had done everything about the basin that I would have her, I told her I knew we should be good friends again; but could not help adding, in a little more serious voice, that I owned of all my servants I had least expected, as I had least deserved it, such treatment from her, when she knew I had held her up at a time when it was in my power, if I had pleased, any hour of the day, to let her drop through my fingers—thus—"* It may, however, be taken for granted that it was not holding the basin, but the kneeling during the ablutions, which Mrs. Howard resented, thinking that the new Queen was desirous deliberately to inflict an indignity upon her. What Caroline did not know was that Mrs. Howard, in the interval which elapsed before her reappearance, had acquainted herself with the conditions of service of the Woman of the Bedchamber, and, having learnt that she was in the wrong, and the Queen in the right, wisely made no more ado.

DR. ARBUTHNOT TO THE HON. MRS. HOWARD

"London,
"May 29, 1728.

"In obedience to your commands I write this to inform you of some things you desired me to ask Lady Masham,† and what follows is dictated by her ladyship.

* Hervey: *Memoirs*, II. 188.

† Abigail Hill (d. 1734), became Bedchamber-Woman to Queen Anne by the influence of her cousin, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, about 1704, and eventually

"The Bedchamber-*Woman* came in to waiting before the Queen's prayers, which was before her Majesty was dressed. The Queen often shifted in a morning: if her Majesty shifted at noon, the Bedchamber-*Lady* being by, the Bedchamber-*Woman* gave the shift to the Lady without any ceremony, and the *Lady* put it on. Sometimes, likewise, the Bedchamber-Woman gave the fan to the *Lady* in the same manner; and this was all that the Bedchamber-*Lady* did about the Queen at her dressing.

"When the Queen washed her hands, the Page of the Back-stairs brought and set down upon a side-table the basin and ewer; then the Bedchamber-Woman set it before the Queen, and knelt on the other side of the table over-against the Queen, the Bedchamber-Lady only looking on. The Bedchamber-Woman poured the water out of the ewer upon the Queen's hands.

"The Bedchamber-Woman pulled on the Queen's gloves, when she could not do it herself.

"The Page of the Back-stairs was called in to put on the Queen's shoes.

"When the Queen dined in public, the Page reached the glass to the Bedchamber-Woman, and she to the Lady-in-Waiting.

"The Bedchamber-Woman brought the chocolate, and gave it without kneeling.

"In general the Bedchamber-Woman had no dependence on the Lady of the Bedchamber.

"If you have the curiosity to be informed of any thing else, you shall have what information Lady Masham can give you; for I must tell you from myself that you have quite charmed her."§

Mrs. Howard's position was bearable while the Prince was considerate, but as the years passed his interest in her waned, and then she found it almost intolerable. Mrs. Howard was in her fortieth year when her lover ascended the throne, and it soon became evident that she had not the same attraction for him as in the earlier days of their connection. For some

supplanted her relative in the Queen's favour, being given care of the Privy Purse in 1711, when the Duchess was dismissed. She married in 1707 Samuel Masham (1679?–1758), Groom of the Bedchamber to Prince George of Denmark, who was one of the twelve Tories created peers in 1712.

§ Add. MSS. 22625, f. 27.

years after he became King he still visited her apartments every evening, but his manner became more and more brusque, and sometimes offensive. He was on one occasion heard to reply to her, "That is none of your business, Ma'am, you have nothing to do with that;" and another time when he came into the room while the Queen was dressing, he snatched off the handkerchief, and cried rudely to Mrs. Howard, "Because you have an ugly neck yourself, you hide the Queen's." Already in the year following the accession of George II., Mrs. Howard felt that her position was becoming intolerable, and she seriously considered leaving the Court.

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD TO THE KING

"Kensington,
"October 16, 1728.

"SIR,

"With the greatest submission and regret I beg leave to address your Majesty; and that you will permit me to tell you that as I am very surprised that I am under your displeasure, so am entirely ignorant in what manner I have incurred it, except you were offended at the liberty I took the last time I had the honour to see you in the garden. I can truly answer for the sincerity of my heart in what I then said. If I do lose the honour of your friendship; it is a less unhappiness to owe this misfortune to this ill-judged honesty than to any other reason. Were I allowed to pursue the same way in thinking of your Majesty that I have for fourteen years past, I should then think it impossible that such a trifle could wear out the remembrance of a fourteen years' attachment with unwearied duty and respect for you.

"Sir, as in all this time I never asked a favour of your Majesty for myself, I am now from this very reason under a necessity to do it. I need not take up your time, Sir, with particulars. You know my circumstances and the engagement I am in with Lord Suffolk; and consequently my incapacity to perform them without your assistance. Forgive me, Sir, if I beg to know how far I am to depend on your favours, and how soon it will be agreeable to you that I leave your family. You with the utmost respect permit me to say; that from your Majesty's behaviour to me, it is impossible not to think my removal from your presence must be most agreeable to your inclinations. Sir, if in any manner I do not express myself with the most profound

respect and clarity, I beg your Majesty will forgive me for on all occasion I have ever wished to show the greatest regard and veneration for you ; who am,

" Sir,

" Your Majesty's most dutiful and most obedient humble servant,

" H. Howard.

" Sir, I beg you will forgive the manner that I send this, but I am under a necessity not knowing any other way to convey it to your Majesty."*

In the summer of 1729 Mrs. Howard had confided to Lady Hervey her decline in favour, and confessed that she had thought of withdrawing from Court. " I very much applaud your discretion in retiring whenever you behold the clouds gather," that lady replied ; " but I own I suspect you of bragging when you tell me of avoiding the sunshine : to my certain knowledge, that is a precaution that has long been unnecessary : no, indeed, my dear Madam, the sun has not darted one beam on you a great while. You may freeze in the dog-days, for all the warmth you will find from our *Sol*. I am not at all amazed to find his royal highness is so scorched : the sun shines so kindly on him at this distance, that to be sure when it comes near him it must be very violent. I expect to see him next winter with the complexion of a West Indian." Mrs. Howard did not at that time, however, take the projected step, but it was evidently discussed among her friends, and in November, 1730, Swift wrote to her under the impression that she had actually retired, and congratulated her " for being delivered from the toil, the envy, the slavery, and vexation of a favourite."

Matters remained as they were for a while, and then an important change took place in her circumstances. On June 22, 1731, Edward, eighth Earl of Suffolk died, and her husband succeeded to the title. It was not befitting the dignity of a Countess that she should hold the place of a Woman of the Bedchamber, and she was at once relieved of her duties. It was, however, still desired that she should remain at Court, and she was invited to become a Lady of the Bedchamber. This

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 4. How this letter was sent is not known.

offer she declined, saying that any other appointment would be more acceptable*—meaning, no doubt, any office which did not keep her in constant attendance upon the Queen. She was then given the post of Groom of the Stole to her Majesty, which the Duchess of Dorset, who now retired, had filled since July, 1727. "Though an office somewhat incongruous in name, that of Groom of the Stole is usually combined with the duties of the Mistress of the Robes when a female sovereign is on the throne. . . . The Stole is a narrow vest, lined with crimson sarcenet, and was formerly embroidered with roses, fleur-de-lis, and crowns; but the office of Groom is a sinecure,"† Dodd has stated; and further explanation is given by the Duchess of Marlborough in a letter to the Duchess of St. Albans, who held the post when Caroline first came to England: "In all the Courts that I have seen, the Groom of the Stole has the first place, and next to the Lady-in-Waiting, whatever quality she may be of, and after them two all the Ladies are placed according to their own titles."‡ In ordinary cases the Groom of the Stole was only in attendance at Court on formal occasions, but it was arranged that Mrs. Howard would still live at St. James's.§

THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO JOHN GAY

"Hampton Court,
"June 29, 1731.

"To prevent all future quarrels and disputes, I shall let you know that I have kissed hands for the place of Mistress of the Robes. Her Majesty did me the honour to give me the choice of Lady of the Bedchamber, or that, which I find so much more agreeable to me, that I did not take one moment to consider of it. The Duchess of Dorset resigned it for me; and every thing as yet promises more happiness for the latter part of my life than I have yet had a prospect of. Seven nights' quiet sleep, and seven easy days have almost worked a miracle upon me;

* Lady Pembroke to Mrs. Clayton, July 8, 1731 (Thomson: *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 242). The date of this and the other letters of Lady Pembroke are wrongly given by Mrs. Thomson as 1734.

† *Manual of Dignities*, 138.

‡ Lady Cowper: *Diary*, Appendix A.

§ Lady Pembroke to Mrs. Clayton, July 1, 1731 (Thomson: *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 233).

for if I cannot say I am perfectly well, yet it is certain, even my pain is more supportable than it was. I shall now often visit Marble Hill: my time is become very much my own, and I shall see it without the dread of being obliged to sell it to answer the engagements I had put myself under to avoid a greater evil. Mr. H[oward] took possession of body and goods, and was not prevailed upon till yesterday to resign the former for burial. Poor Lord Suffolk took so much care in the will he made, that the best lawyers say it must stand good. I am persuaded it will be tried to the utmost.

"I have at this time a great deal of business upon my hands, but not from my Court employment. You must take this as a particular favour."*

The trouble which threatened about the late Lord Suffolk's will was because he had left everything he had—a matter of £2,000 or £3,000 at most—to his sister-in-law, naming the Duke of Argyll and Lord Islay as trustees;† and her husband was inclined to contest the matter.

John Gay to the Countess of Suffolk

"July 8, 1731.

"Your letter was not ill bestowed, for I found in it such an air of satisfaction that I have a pleasure every time I think of it. I fancy (though by her silence she seems to approve of your Ladyship's conduct) the Duchess will meet you at Highclere; for those that have a real friendship cannot be satisfied with general relations; they want to inquire into the minute circumstances of life, that they may be sure things are as happy as they appear to be, and that is a curiosity that is excusable.

"I do not like lawsuits; I wish you could have your right without them: for I fancy there never was one since the world began, that, besides the cost, was not attended with anxiety and vexation. But as you descended from lawyers, what might be my plague perhaps may be only your amusement. Nobody but yourself hath let us know any thing about you: judge then how welcome your ladyship's letter was to me. I find this change of life of yours is a subject that I cannot so well write upon; it is a thing that one cannot so well judge of in general. But as for your Ladyship's conduct in this

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 53.

† Lady Pembroke to Mrs. Clayton, July 1, 1731 (Thomson: *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 233).

juncture, my approbation goes for nothing ; for all the world knows that I am partial. When you have a mind to make me happy, write to me ; for of late I have had but very little chance, and only chance, of seeing you. If ever you thought well of me ; if ever you believed I wished you well, and wished to be of service to you, think the same of me ; for I am the same, and shall always be so.

" Mr. Pope, I fear, is determined never to write to me. I hope he is well. If you see Miss Blount or Mr. Pope, I beg them to accept my compliments."*

Croker found in the new appointment of Lady Suffolk a further proof of the Queen's favour,† but he stultifies this statement by the remark that it was made because her Majesty " feared a younger and less discreet rival, did not wish her to leave the Court (though the King would perhaps have been pleased at her departure), and so hit upon this expedient to retain her."‡ Lady Suffolk remained at St. James's, even after the death of her husband, which took place on September 28, 1733 ; but the relations between her and the King steadily became worse. " The interest of Lady Suffolk with the King had long been declining : his nightly visits all last winter had been much shorter than they used to be, and not without sometimes a total intermission," Lord Hervey wrote in 1734. " His morning walks, too, this last summer resembled his nightly visits the preceding winter ; and all those who saw them together at the commerce-table in the evening in his private apartment plainly perceived they were so ill together that, when he did not neglect her, the notice he took of her was still a stronger mark of his dislike than his taking none."§ Matters having come to this pass, Lady Suffolk in August asked for leave of absence from Court—on the plea of ill-health.

Though, as has been shown, there were other and sufficient reasons for Lady Suffolk desiring to get away for a while from St. James's, this, however, was not a mere pretext. She did indeed want a change of scene and company. For many years past she had, intermittently, been far from well. In October,

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 55.

† *Suffolk Correspondence*, I., XVI.

‡ *Ibid.*, II., I.

§ *Memoirs*, II. 88.

1725, Lady Hervey alluded to her having been ill ;* and in September of the following year Lord Bolingbroke told Pope that she had been extremely ill,† though the poet was soon able to report that she was much better, " since she took to water-drinking,"‡ and deprived herself of her favourite ale. In July, 1728, she herself mentioned to Gay that she had been suffering from her " old complaint," and two months later she had undergone a painful operation. " I know you are so indulgent to your friends, that you would not interrupt their diversions ; and as you always affirmed pain was my particular one, when I tell you I have been in the most exquisite for many days, and which left so sensible a feeling for some weeks, that I could attend to nothing else, I need say nothing more to excuse my silence," she wrote to Lord Chesterfield. " I sent for Mr. Cheselden,§ who, give him his due, worked very hard, but found so much resistance, that I was justified to inquire no further then into my jaw ; besides, finding nothing there, we were afraid to proceed."‖ This found its way into the newspapers, and Lady Hervey wrote to ask for particulars. " The action you compliment me upon," the answer ran, " was having my jaw bored, without any great probability that it could do me any good ; the pain of the operation was almost insupportable, and the consequence was many weeks' misery, and I am not yet free from pain." It may be wondered if this operation had any connection with that alluded to by Horace Walpole. " Lady Suffolk was early afflicted with deafness," he wrote. " Cheselden, the surgeon, then in favour at Court, persuaded her that he had hopes of being able to cure deafness by some operation on the drum of the ear, and offered to try the experiment on a condemned convict [Charles Ray], then in Newgate, who was deaf. If the man could be pardoned he would try it ; and, if he succeeded, would practise the same cure on her ladyship. She

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 17. † Swift : *Works* (ed. Scott), XVII. 64.

‡ Pope : *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX., 111.

§ William Cheselden (1688–1752), surgeon and anatomist, mentioned by Pope in his " Imitations of Horace " :

" I'll do what Mead and Cheselden advise."

‖ Add. MSS. 22626, f. 94.

obtained the man's pardon, who was cousin to Cheselden, who had feigned that pretended discovery to save his relation—and no more was heard of the experiment. The man saved his ear too —but Cheselden was disgraced at Court."*

Lady Suffolk's taking a holiday was regarded as an item of such general interest to be chronicled in the newspapers; and much speculation was aroused by the news. "You have, I suppose, seen in the papers that Lady Suffolk sets out for Bath on Tuesday next," the Hon. George Berkeley wrote to a friend, late in August. "This is true, and has occasioned as much speculation in the family of Kensington as the removal of two or three minor ministers would have done. I believe the secret of this journey is, that she has a mind to get out of her lodgings at Kensington, which being at least three feet under ground, are at this time of the year very damp and unwholesome, especially to her ill health, not in a very strong constitution; besides showing she will not be such a slave to the Court as she has been, having never been six weeks in the whole absent from it in twenty years' service."†

Of the Hon. George Berkeley‡ more than passing notice must be taken, since he will soon figure in this narrative as the second husband of Lady Suffolk. Born about 1693, the fourth and youngest son of Charles, second Earl of Berkeley, who for six years was Envoy-Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Holland, he was admitted to Westminster School on the foundation in 1708, and three years later was elected a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated M.A. in 1713. He entered Parliament in 1718 as member for Dover, and represented that constituency until 1734, when he was returned for Heydon, for which borough he sat until his death twelve years later. In 1723 he had been made Master-Keeper and Governor of St. Katherine's Hospital, near the Tower of London. He had a

* *Reminiscences*, CXXXIV. † Add. MSS. 22628, f. 100.

‡ The issue of Charles, second Earl of Berkeley (see p. 3), was: four sons and three daughters: Charles, Viscount Dursley (1679–1699); James (d. 1736), who succeeded to the earldom (see p. 27); Henry (1690–1736), Colonel of the 4th Foot, Equerry to George I., and sometime M.P. for Gloucester; George; Mary, who married Thomas Chambers, of Hanworth, Middlesex; Elizabeth (see p. 3); and Penelope, who died unmarried.

wide circle of friends, which included Henry Pelham,* with whom he was at school at Westminster, and Lord Chesterfield, with whom he was at Cambridge, where they cemented a life-long intimacy. He was also ostensibly on good terms with William Pulteney. "Lord Chesterfield and Mr. George Berkeley, with whom Pulteney lived in the most seeming intimacy, he mortally hated," Lord Hervey wrote in 1727, "but continued that seeming intimacy long after he did so, merely from a refinement of pride, and an affection of being blind to what nobody else could help seeing. They had both made love to his wife, and, though I firmly believe, both unsuccessfully, yet many were of a contrary opinion; for her folly, her vanity, her coquetry, had given her husband the same jealousy, and the world the same suspicions, as if she had gone all those lengths in private, which her public conduct, without one's being very credulous, would naturally have led one to believe."† On the death of Congreve in January, 1729, Berkeley, at the request of the Duchess of Marlborough—the great Duke's daughter, upon whom the title devolved—acted as one of the pall-bearers, in company with the Duke of Bridgewater,‡ Lord Godolphin, Lord Cobham,§ Lord Wilmington|| and General Churchill.

When Lady Suffolk first met Berkeley it is, apparently, impossible to ascertain. His sister, Lady Betty Germaine, had long been a friend of hers, and so had his niece, Mary Chambers; also they had many mutual friends. They began to correspond in the early summer of 1734, and it is evident from the tone of their letters that they were then already on friendly terms.

* The Hon. Henry Pelham (1695–1754), younger son of Thomas, first Baron Pelham, and brother of Thomas Pelham-Holles, first Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Secretary of War, 1724–1730; Paymaster of the Forces, 1730–1743; First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1743–1754.

† *Memoirs*, I. 11.

‡ Scroope Egerton, fourth Earl of Bridgewater (1681–1745), created Duke of Bridgewater, 1720.

§ Richard Temple (1669?–1749), created Baron Cobham, 1714; Colonel of the First Dragoons, 1715; sworn of the Privy Council and appointed Constable of Windsor Castle, 1718; Governor of Jersey for life, 1723; dismissed from his employments by Walpole, 1733; created Field-Marshal, 1742.

|| Spencer Compton, first Earl of Wilmington. See p. 174.

THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"Shotover,
"June 19, 1734.

"It is impossible to be at Shotover, and not think of writing to Lady Suffolk;* and though letters from hence were not always directed to a palace, I am not afraid of calling to your remembrance the distress you suffered when you corresponded most with this place, since that very suffering was the very strongest proof imaginable how little you deserved it.

"We performed our journey hither with great ease, only little Pope was very ill the whole day, and compassion for him may pass for a reason why I was so little entertained with a very lively conversation which at some time would have been very agreeable to me, as would the misfortunes which were very happily contrived for the Major-general [Dormer] during the whole journey. Pope grew better at supper, and of course very irregular, and laughed at me for the care I pretended to take of him.

"We shall set out this morning for Rowsham,† where I hope to find something that will please me, though I do not like the prospect I have of staying there much longer than I intended. I am heartily tired of the country already, and long for an account of what is doing at and near London. Is Mrs. Herbert to come soon into waiting? Is Lord Pem[broke] in better humour? Have [Miss] Carteret and you *keyed* it to both your hearts' content? But, above all, let me know if you have a good head and face; for that would be a great satisfaction to

"Yours, etc.,
"G. B."‡

THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Kensington,
"June 20, 1734.

"There was no company at the tea-table on Tuesday, but what most people hate to keep [*i.e.*, herself], but for whom I have so particular a respect and regard, that upon her approbation for every action of my life, my ease and happiness has and must always depend. Your bad memory was not forgot in our long conversation; and it was agreed, that whoever

* Shotover, near Oxford, was the seat of Augustus Schütz. What Lady Suffolk's association with the place was is not known.

† Rowsham, near Woodstock, was the seat of Mr. Dormer, elder brother of the General.

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 33.

could forget the presbyterian parson was neither to be trusted nor relied upon ; that most certainly you forgot me before you reached Brentford ; and that you have never thought at all of poor Miss Smith.*

"If I valued myself much upon the command of my temper, I have been most terribly mortified. On Tuesday last, in the Commerce Room, when Mr. Paget told me that there was a report that Lord Stair had killed the Duke of Argyll in a duel, I behaved so very ill, that it ought to humble me for the rest of my life ; but even this has not prevented my being truly sensible of the greatest pleasure in hearing since that the report was without any foundation. If I have nothing to amuse you from Kensington, it is because you are dull and want a taste, and not that the place does not abundantly supply both the instructive and entertaining ; and I am positive that I have given you sufficient proof that I neither want a pen nor penetration to do both justice. I give you my word that I have not written this over above three times."†‡

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THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Kensington,
"June 22, 1734.

"If it *was* Shotover that put you in mind of writing to me, I am very glad you stopped there : I do not remember that I ever liked any of the letters from that place better than that I received last ; nor do I think the satisfaction was entirely owing to the difference of the direction. I do believe you had more compassion for Pope than for the Major-general [Dormer] : I desire his ingratitude may not prevent your future care of him ; but I do not by any means insist that you should carry it so far as to lose the pleasure of the company or the country. By what I know, and by what I have heard, it is hardly possible to be tired of either. Miss Hobart§ comes to-day : Mrs. Herbert has never written to me since I came to Kensington. The *hero* [Lord Pembroke] plays every day at tennis, and looks dreadfully. Miss Carteret and I have not had so much as a tea-box *key* together since I saw you.

"I have now satisfied your curiosity in every particular but about the head and face : I think the less that is said of either is the better ; they are neither pleasant nor profitable to others nor the owner. I am going to dine in the [Kensington]

* See p. 47. † Add. MSS. 22629, f. 34.

‡ Lady Suffolk was a very careless writer.

§ Lady Suffolk's niece, Dorothy. See p. 37.

Square: they go soon into Northamptonshire: they and Lady Catherlough* dined on Thursday with the Duchess of Dorset; but nothing seems changed in respect of the men. The actions of women are too inconsiderable to draw any consequences from them: thus I know your pride and arrogancy in power makes all you men reason; but I do not despair to see some of my sex vindicate us, and make a figure that may make some of you tremble. Mrs. Herbert is just come: I design her for one of these, and have now ten thousand precepts to give her, which happily releases you."†

THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"Stowe,‡
"June, 1734.

"In vain I scratch my head and bite my nails; I cannot for my soul make any thing of the presbyterian parson; but am sure he is very malicious, to affirm that for his sake I am not to be trusted or relied on, when I profess I am at this moment, and verily think I ever have been, an utter stranger to him. As for poor Miss Smith, pray assure her, the first time you breakfast with her alone, which I suppose will be soon (for I take you two to be inseparable), that I am so far from forgetting her, that she is never out of my thoughts; that there is nothing I so ardently wish as a more intimate acquaintance; and that, as desirous as you seem of her approbation, I have as much regard and respect for her as you have, am much fonder of her, and infinitely more sensible of her merits.

"We set out yesterday, two coachfuls of us, from Rowsham, with an intention only to dine at Stowe; but here we still are, and are likely to continue till Tuesday at least: it is enchanted ground, and not in people's power to leave when they please. Stowe is a great beauty, the master of it in good health and excellent spirits, by which the Major-general [Dormer] gets a new tormentor; not that his old one [Pope] was not sufficient, who has really laughed himself fat at poor Jemmy's expense, who in proportion hath fretted himself lean. Charming as Stowe certainly is, I own a partiality for Rowsham. One advantage must be allowed it; there is at the bottom of a sloping hill in the garden, a most delightful stream, which runs from thence directly to Marble Hill, and is no small addition even

* Mary, only daughter of Lord Henry Cavendish, married Colonel Fane (1682?–1762), created Baron Catherlough, 1733. He succeeded in 1736 as (seventh) Earl of Westmorland.

† Add. MSS. 22629, f. 35.

‡ Stowe was the seat of Lord Cobham.

to the beauties of that place. I have no more paper, not so much as for a cover."*

THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Kensington,
"June 25, 1734.

"Biting the nails and scratching the head are two very ugly tricks: for fear you should get such ill habits, I will not say another word of the presbyterian parson. I have made your compliments to my friend [Miss Smith]; but I am not sure that she approves this regular correspondence; as she was always a much better, so she was always a much stricter woman than I am. By a letter I had yesterday from Mrs. Herbert, I find her most extremely indulgent to me; but she limits it to a very short time, that of her coming into waiting. I perceive she has very selfish views, and doubts not of success; for she plainly tells me that she has one charm that is irresistible.

"If you wish to be disenchanted and leave Stowe, you are very unworthy of being there. I hope you have visited the round temple, and paid a due regard to the memory of Mr. Hampden. I forgive your partiality for Rowsham, for the sake of the river, and upon condition you give me a very particular description of it. I have had twenty people with me since I sat down to write; but I have gained nothing for your benefit, only that the Princess Royal is expected every day, that she was adored in Holland, and that she comes to make us all happy.

"I wish you would take some pity upon your fat and lean friends [Dormer and Pope]: a change of their present humours is absolutely necessary for them both. I cannot prescribe at this distance; but I should think you, that know their constitution, and are upon the place, might find proper physic for their distemper. If I had the same advantage I should not despair of success.

"I was surprised at your ill-breeding, to send a letter without an envelope."†

THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"Rowsham,
"June 27, 1734.

"We left Stowe on Tuesday, and I hope we shall leave Rowsham on Sunday. One is a most magnificent place, and the other a very pretty one; but at present I have no relish

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 36. † Add. MSS. 22629, f. 37.

for either grandeur or beauty so far from London, and I think I really like nothing in the country but a post-day. I could not fail paying a due regard to Mr. Hampden's memory, for I am sure nobody can be more sensible of what England owes to him than I am; but I hear there is another bust of one of that family* expected, which, if I can judge right, ought to be preferred infinitely before his: if those who promised it do not keep their word, it is proposed to make the Venus of Medicis serve instead of it, and what will your prude friend [Miss Smith] say then,—she who can be so very easily scandalized at what happens at fifty miles' distance? I am glad to hear Mrs. Herbert intends to be soon at London; I can truly pity people who live in the country; I, who can scarcely bear it a fortnight, though in company with those who know how to employ their time there so well, that they have not yet been once reduced to play at cards. Pope diverted us with translating Horace: I am sorry for your sake I can remember but one couplet, which you shall have to make you some amends for the stuff you have already perused.

> "*Our ancient kings (and sure those kings were wise)*
> *Judged for themselves, and saw with their own eyes.*"†

Lady Suffolk went to Bath, and found there a large circle of her acquaintances. The Princess was taking the waters; and on pleasure bent, besides Berkeley, were Lady Burlington, Lord Bolingbroke, the Hon. Robert Sawyer Herbert and his wife, Charles Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield, Pope and the Misses Blount. Presently came also William Pulteney.

Lady Hervey to the Hon. Mrs. Howard

"St. James's,
"September 23, 1724.

"But that I fear it might sound equally absurd to make an excuse for denying myself a pleasure, or the giving you an unnecessary trouble, I could give you sundry and excellent reasons for not having sooner made use of the liberty dear Lady Suffolk's good nature could not refuse to my request.

* Lady Suffolk was a great grand-daughter of John Hampden (see p. 175). Lord Cobham designed to put her bust in the Temple of Friendship at Stowe.

† Add. MSS. 22629, f. 38.

I will not plead stupidity, because I should condemn myself by that ; not for my not writing before, but for my writing now ; and as the conversing with you any way is a pleasure I cannot give up, I will not give you hopes of getting rid of this correspondence, by flattering you that I forbear writing whenever I find myself extremely dull ; on the contrary, it is then I generally have recourse to you as to the best *anti-stupiditus* I know. When I find myself far gone, I presently apply to you, and if that has not the effect immediately, I conclude my case is desperate. To say the truth, I stand at present in great need of your assistance, and beg therefore you will be expeditious in sending me my remedy. Pray do not let there be any bitters nor acids in it, for neither of them agree with me ; sweetness and emollients are what sit best on my stomach.

" I believe the Bath is a mere hospital at present. As I am very curious in the nature and process of all diseases, and like the theory, though not the practice of physic, I should be very much obliged to you, if you would give me some account of those invalids who are most distempered, with the observations you have made on the nature and symptoms of their several maladies, and what medicines you think would prove efficacious to those who are absolutely incurable. There is a poor lady [Lady Bristol] that went there a little while ago, who, I fear, is of the last class. She abounds with peccant humours, and has a complication of distempers, for she has frequently had *ruptures*, is subject to *inflammations*, *false conceptions*, to diseases of the *tongue*, and is hardly ever free from a fistula lachrymalis ; indeed I believe there is no hopes of her ever being better, and in my opinion the best things that can be given her are repeated quieting draughts.

" Pray let me know if the waters have had any effect on a certain *great* man [? William Pulteney], who has a constant weight and heaviness in his head, attended with a difficulty of utterance, and an inability of speaking to be understood, that has very much the appearance of a paralytic disorder. He has two physicians, but I believe they do not consult together ; the one [Mrs. Pulteney] allowed him only light food, well sweetened, the other [a lady whose name has not transpired], I am told, indulges him with *flesh*. Pray which of these regimens does he most incline to ?

" I am sorry our poor little friend [Pope] was forced to go to Bath for so unpleasant a distemper ; for I am informed it was to get rid of some *proud flesh* that is grown to his *side*, and makes him extremely uneasy.* It is thought it will prove

* This is an allusion to Martha Blount, whose ill-temper at this time greatly distressed Pope.

a *mortification;* but I am satisfied if all the practitioners of the place he is in can administer any ease to him, he will be sure of it, for he always loved applying himself to all the quacks he could meet with; and when he was in perfect health, was always fancying or feigning himself ill, often changed his physician, and frequently would have three or four at a time; but they all found him out, and the moment they felt his pulse, declared him only the *malade imaginaire.* I believe, though, his present disease has more reality in it; but I dare say he now does very like a lady of our acquaintance, and complains of every distemper but that which he really has.

"If you complain of the length of my letter I shall not be surprised; there is so much of it, that I think you cannot but chide or thank me for it soon; so that one way or other it must answer the end I propose it, which is, to procure me a letter from you, and to convince you that, absent or present, I think my time best employed when I am giving you any proof of my being."

From Bath Lady Suffolk wrote to Ann Pitt,* with whom she had become very friendly, and for whom she had a very kindly regard. "If, upon the whole," she wrote about this time, "you can discover in my letter that I think well of you, that I love you very much, and that I have a very sincere value and esteem for you, I shall be satisfied; and if you do not, you are the dullest, ungratefullest little beast that ever was or ever will be called a Maid of Honour."†

COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO ANN PITT

"Bath,

"September 25, 1734.

"To obey your commands I will say a great deal upon a most worthless subject, that of my own health. I have drank the waters a week, and in this time I have had a relapse into one of my violent headaches, attended with low spirits and very bad nights. The fatigue of what is called the *diversions* of this place would be insupportable to me; but I began in a much more retired life than is fashionable here. I have kept my resolution of never breakfasting abroad, and consequently

* Ann (d. 1780), daughter of Robert, and sister of William Pitt, a Maid of Honour to Queen Caroline, and subsequently Keeper of the Privy Purse to the Dowager Princess of Wales.

† *Fortescue MSS.*, I. 93.

have but little occasion for that same gown that gives Lord Pembroke so much uneasiness; but I am sure had he heard Lady Margaret Herbert (when I proposed her coming to the Bath) say that she had a very good one for that use, it would have given very noisy pleasure to him and all Tommy's company. Mr. Berkeley will not do justice to any part of the entertainment, if he does not use his Bible oath that the most agreeable hour he passes in the twenty-four is at my breakfast table. Mrs. Hobart thinks the beginning of a ball has something in it that is very amusing; as for Mrs. Blount she employs both thoughts and words upon more substantial pleasures, and is for ever in the state of marriage, being kept, or educating her children. The town is full of incendiaries; but I must say this in praise of the waters, that they create a great benevolence of temper in public; but as I am famous for my penetration and observation, I have discovered that, after the waters have passed, there issues a sharp humour that can be discharged only at the tongue, and into the ear of their next neighbour; and it has been my lot to be in the situation of this necessary vehicle to all the great and handsome, much to my honour, little to my entertainment now, but I propose, future satisfaction."*

After an enjoyable visit of about seven weeks, Lady Suffolk, in company with Martha Blount, left Bath, on October 26, so as to be at St. James's to pay her respects to the King on his birthday four days later. The chronicle of events at the spa immediately after her departure was conveyed to her in the following amusing letter by Lord Chesterfield:

"Bath,
"November 2, 1734.

"A general history of the Bath since you left it, together with the particular memoirs of Amoretto's† life and conversation, are matters of too great importance to want any introduction. Therefore, without further preamble, I send you the very minutes, just as I have them down to help my own memory; the variety of events, and the time necessary to observe them, not having yet allowed me the leisure to put them in that style and order in which I propose they shall hereafter appear in public.

* *Fortescue MSS.*, I. 92.

† "Amoretto" was a nickname bestowed upon the Hon. Robert Sawyer Herbert.

"*October* 27.—Little company appeared at the pump; those that were there drank the waters of affliction for the departure of Lady Suffolk and Mrs. Blount. What was said of them both I need not tell you; for it was so obvious to those that said it, that it cannot be less so to those that deserve it. Amoretto went upon Lansdowne to evaporate his grief for the loss of his Parthenissa [Martha Blount], in memory of whom (and the wind being very cold into the bargain) he tied his handkerchief over his hat, and looked very sadly.

"In the evening, the usual tea-table met at Lyndsey's [Assembly Rooms], the two principal persons [*i.e.*, Lady Suffolk and Martha Blount] excepted; who, it was hoped, were then got safe to Newbury. Amoretto's main action was at our table; but, episodically, he took pieces of bread and butter, and cups of tea, at about ten others. He laughed his way through the girls out of the long room into the little one, where he *tallied* till he swore, and swore till he went home, and probably some time afterwards.

"The Countess of Burlington,* in the absence of her Royal Highness, held a circle at Hayes's [Assembly Rooms], where she lost a favourite snuff-box, but unfortunately kept her temper.

"*October* 28.—Breakfast was at Lady Anne's, where Amoretto was with difficulty prevailed upon to eat and drink as much as he had a mind to. At night he was observed to be pleasant with the girls, and with less restraint than usual, which made some people surmise that he comforted himself for the loss of Lady Suffolk and Parthenissa, by the liberty and impunity their absence gave him.

"*October* 29.—Amoretto breakfasted incognito, but appeared at the ball in the evening, where he distinguished himself by his *bon mots*. He was particularly pleased to compare the two Miss Towardins, who are very short and were a dancing, to a couple of totums set a spinning. The justness and liveliness of this image struck Mr. Marriott to such a degree, that he begged leave of the author to put it off for his own, which was granted him. He declared afterwards, to several people, that Mr. Herbert beat the whole world at similes.

"*October* 30.—Being his Majesty's birthday, little company appeared in the morning, all being resolved to look well at night. Mr. Herbert dined at Mrs. Walters's with young Mr. Barnard whom he rallied to death. [Beau] Nash gave a

* Lady Dorothy Savile, daughter of William, Marquis of Halifax, married Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington (see p. 105). Lady Burlington was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline.

ball at Lyndsey's, where Mrs. Tate appeared for the first time, and was noticed by Mr. Herbert ; he wore his gold laced clothes on the occasion, and looked so fine, that, standing by chance in the middle of the dancers, he was taken by many at a distance for a gilt garland. He concluded his evening, as usual, with basset and blasphemy.

" *October* 31.—Amoretto breakfasted at Lady Anne's, where, being now more easy and familiar, he called for a half-peck loaf and a pound of butter—let off a great many ideas, and, had he had the same inclination to have let any thing else, would doubtless have done it.

" The Countess of Burlington bespoke the play, as you may see by the inclosed original bill ; the audience consisted of seventeen souls, of whom I made one.

" *November* 1.—Amoretto took a vomit in the morning, and then with a clear and excellent stomach dined with me, and went to the ball at night, where Mrs. Hamilton chiefly engrossed him.

" Mrs. Jones gave Sir Humphrey Monoux* pain with Mr. Browne, which gave Sir Humphrey the tooth-ache, but Mr. Jones has since made up matters between them.

" *November* 2.—Circular letters were received here from *Miss* Secretary Russel, notifying the safe arrival at London with many interesting particulars, and with gracious assurances of the continuance of a firm and sincere friendship. It would be as hard to say who received the strongest assurances, as it would be to determine who credited them the worst.

" Mrs. Hamilton bespoke the play at night, which we all interested ourselves so much to fill, that there were as many people turned back as let in : it was so hot that the Countess of Burlington could not stay it out.†

" You now see, by this week's journal, how much you have lost by leaving the Bath so soon ; at least I can assure you we feel what we lost by your leaving it before us. We are all disjointed, and so weary, that I have prevailed with my brother and Charles Stanhope to start from hence with me on Tuesday se'nnight, which will just complete the two months I was ordered

* Sir Humphrey Monoux, of Wortton, fourth baronet (1703?–1757), M.P. for Tavistock, 1728–1734, and for Stockbridge, 1734–1741 ; married in December, 1742, Elizabeth, widow of — Jones, of Waltham Abbey, Essex.

† It will be remembered that two days earlier only seventeen persons were present at the performance bespoke by Lady Burlington, which may account for her Ladyship's feeling unwell at the spectacle of a full house at a performance bespoke by another.

to stay. We set Mr. Herbert down at Highclere on our way. This day fortnight I hope to have the pleasure of finding you at St. James's, much the better for the Bath ; where, over a hot roll with Miss Blount, I propose giving you the next week's journal by word of mouth."*

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 109.

CHAPTER XIV

LADY SUFFOLK RETIRES FROM COURT

November, 1734

Lady Suffolk returns to Court—She is ignored by the King—She resigns the office of Groom of the Stole—She leaves St. James's without taking leave of his Majesty—Curiosity as to her farewell interview with the Queen—Her record of "The Queen's conversation with Lady Suffolk on her leaving Court"—The Queen's version—Her Majesty both glad and sorry at Lady Suffolk's retirement—Walpole regrets her departure—The Queen's poor opinion of her late servant—The views of other members of the royal family—Letters from Lord Bathurst and the Duchess of Queensberry to Lady Suffolk on her resignation—Lady Betty Germaine thinks it is a case equally for congratulation and condolence—The Opposition affects to see in Lady Suffolk an injured innocent—Lady Suffolk never again goes to Court—Her last sight of the King.

LADY SUFFOLK reappeared at St. James's on the eve of the Birthday (October 30). During the next few days it was noticed that when the King met her either in the Queen's dressing-room or in the drawing-room he barely addressed a word to her; and soon it was whispered that he no longer went in the evening to her apartments. Lady Suffolk made no sign, but she fixed her resolve, and this was the easier to do, from her having so recently, even though temporarily, broken the shackles which for a score of years had bound her to the Court. The first step was to notify the King that it was her intention to withdraw from the Court.

The Countess of Suffolk to the King

[November, 1734.]

"Sir,

"As I formerly received your Majesty's commands to acquaint you with whatever steps I should take in any of my own affairs, though it is your behaviour, Sir, to me that has made

me take the resolution, of leaving your Majesty's family, yet I think no consideration can dispense with my obeying those orders; this makes me take the liberty of telling your Majesty that I shall wait upon the Queen to-morrow morning to receive any commands she may have for me before I leave her service."*

THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE KING

[November, 1734.]

"SIR,

"Before this letter is presented to your Majesty the author of it, the object of your displeasure, shall be removed from out of your family. I should not have had the presumption to write to your Majesty if it was to sue for mercy [or] fly to you for Pardon of offences; but my innocence obliges me to beg for justice. I ask, Sir, but what your meanest, your guiltiest, subject can claim. A malefactor cannot suffer till his accusers prove their charge. No power, no greatness can screen in this case the informers; they must give evidence or the accused is acquitted; the guilt of falsehood falls (as it truly ought) on the heads of the accusers. Is it, then, too much for me to ask, and after the attachment I have had for your Majesty for twenty years? or can I expect less from your justice, your honour, or your former goodness shown to me than to know for what I now suffer the loss of your favour and the honour I had of having some share in your friendship? which friendship has always made the happiness of my life, and I appeal to you, Sir, if (from your own observation) you could even question the truth of this affection. I dare not take up your time in expostulating; but give me leave to say, that the same principles that made me honest, true, and faithful to your Majesty now oblige me to leave your family, where no persuasions could keep me either with the loss of your friendship or under a censure of guilt to have deserved to lose it. As the only means then in my power to prove my innocence I have left the Queen's service.

"To have constantly done my duty in those places her Majesty has honoured me with, and to prove to you with duty the most sincere, the most tender friendship (pardon this expression) attended with the highest sense of gratitude for the honour of your esteem has been my business for twenty years past, nor has any of my own private interests or, which was a stronger temptation, my misfortunes ever influenced me to act contrary to any of these professions, I have now made. The years to come must be employed in the painful wish to forget

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 7.

you and my friend ; but no fears can ever make me forget you as my King, as no usage can prevent my warmest wishes for your happiness or put an end to that profound duty, respect and submission, etc.

" H. Suffolk.

" I hope I have performed this part with the highest regard, respect and submissive behaviour to her Majesty."*

On November 11 the town was startled by the news that Lady Suffolk had resigned the office of Groom of the Stole to her Majesty. " I was not a little astonished at Lady Suffolk's quitting the Court," Lady Pembroke wrote to Mrs. Clayton, six days later, " and imagine it must make a great deal of discourse."† Lady Pembroke was correct in her surmise : the unexpected retirement of the erstwhile favourite created a sensation in polite circles. How it came about no one could say. " The number of stories and contradictory reasons given for Lady Suffolk's removing from Court," Lady Elizabeth Compton wrote to Lady Northampton, " would fill more than ordinary length of one of my Letters (and that generally is e'en long enough too). My own opinion is that it was her own desire to retreat. Her health is bad and the confinement very great, and since her Lord's death that she was out of danger of falling into his hands, I believe she has been desirous to have liberty and a little more time at her own command. Others say that she at Bath was too often in company with Lord B[olingbroke], etc., and that it was a thing agreed on [at] St. James's that before the Norfolk congress was broke up she should be removed from thence."‡

It seemed suddenly to be known to everyone that she had had no previous explanation with the King, or discussion with him, and that she had left St. James's without taking leave of him. It was further known that she had had an interview with the Queen, but what passed between them no one could conjecture. " What Lady Suffolk said to the Queen," Lord Hervey, who was frankly curious, wrote shortly after, " I never could learn, and, considering all circumstances, it must be

* Add. MSS. 22627, f. 6.

† Thomson : *Memoirs of Lady Sundon*, I. 249.

‡ November 21, 1734 ; *Townshend MSS.* 242.

very difficult to guess, since I cannot imagine the mistress could say to the wife, ' Your husband not being so kind as he used to be, I cannot serve you any longer.' " The secret was well kept, but to one or two persons in high places it was divulged, and then it appeared that Lady Suffolk had proceeded very much on the lines which Lord Hervey had thought inconceivable. " You will see by the newspapers that Lady Suffolk has left the Court," the Duke of Newcastle wrote to Walpole, November 13. " The particulars that I had from the Queen are, that last week she acquainted the Queen with her design, putting it upon the King's unkind usage of her. The Queen ordered her to stay a week, which she did ; but last Monday had another interview ; complained again of her unkind treatment from the King, was very civil to the Queen, and went that night to her brother's house in St. James's Square. Everybody is silent upon the subject ; the only consequence it has yet had is, that there are few or no opportunities of seeing the Queen, but I beg you would mention these particulars only to Harry [Henry Pelham]."*

Further enlightenment has recently been forthcoming, in the shape of a paper found among Lady Suffolk's possessions after her death, entitled, " The late Queen's conversation with Lady Suffolk upon her leaving Court," which had been written at her dictation by her nephew John, afterwards second Earl of Buckinghamshire. This is of sufficient interest to be transcribed in full.

" Lady Suffolk : ' Madam, I believe your Majesty thinks I have more assurance than ever anybody had, to stay so long in your family after the public marks the King has given me of his displeasure. What occasioned my not waiting sooner upon your Majesty you will not think was owing to assurance. I have ever had, and hope I have ever shown it, the greatest duty and attention to everything that relates to you, and I could not think it proper whilst you were indisposed to trouble you with anything regarding me. I come now, Madam, to beg leave to retire.'

* Coxe : *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole.*

CAROLINE, CONSORT OF GEORGE II.
After the engraving by T. Faber of the portrait by J. Vanderbanck.

[*To face p.* 232.

" The Queen : ' You surprise me. What do you mean ? I don't believe the King is angry. How has he shown his displeasure ? Did I receive you as if you were under mine ? '

" Lady Suffolk : ' No, Madam, if your Majesty had treated me in the same manner as the King did, I could never again have appeared in your presence.'

" The Queen : ' Child, you dream. Why, I saw the King speak to you.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' Yes, Madam, but those few words more sensibly marked his displeasure than his silence either before or since.'

" The Queen : ' Tell me, has the King really never been down with you since your return ? '

" Lady Suffolk : ' No, Madam.'

" The Queen : ' Upon my word, I did not know it.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' Will your Majesty give me leave to tell you what has passed ? '

" The Queen : ' I hope you will take nothing ill of me. I would have seen you.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' Your Majesty did.'

" The Queen : ' Come, my dear Lady Suffolk, you are very warm, but, believe me, I am your friend, your best friend. You don't know a Court.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' I am very sensible I do not, and feel at this time a most convincing proof of that ignorance. But I fear, Madam, if I have not acquired knowledge in twenty years I never shall now.'

" The Queen : ' Why don't you talk to your friends ? Indeed, you cannot judge this for yourself. I always do so.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' If twenty years' service had not been able to defend me from falling a sacrifice to my enemies, would your Majesty have me, by calling in my friends, make them answerable for the measures I may take, and involve them in my ruin ? '

" The Queen : ' Child, they are your enemies who want to get you out, and they will be the first to drop you. Oh, my dear Lady Suffolk, you do not know how differently, when you are out, people will behave.'

" Lady Suffolk : ' Madam, the first part of what you say

I am very sure of, but really I do not understand the second, and that some people may show me it was the courtier and not me that was liked. I cannot say that the keeping of such acquaintance will be an inducement to keep me at Court. Surely, Madam, such are better lost.'

"THE QUEEN: 'You are very warm.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I beg that if, in talking to your Majesty, I use any word that does not mark the greatest respect to the King, you will be pleased to tell me, for I come fully determined to take my leave with the same respect, submission, and duty, with which I have behaved for twenty years. Your Majesty has often told me that I have never failed in anything for your service in either of the places you have honoured me with, and, indeed, Madam, I don't know how far your Majesty may think it respectful to make this declaration, but I beg it may be permitted me for a moment to speak of the King as a man only who was my friend. He has been dearer to me than my own brother; so, Madam, as a friend I feel resentment at being ill-treated, and sorrow to have lost his friendship; but as my King and master, I have the greatest submission to his pleasure, yet I wish I knew of what I am accused, though I know my innocence, as it must be some horrid crime.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Oh, fie! You commit a crime! Don't talk so.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, as I know his Majesty's justice and his warmth of friendship, I know he could not for anything less punish me so severely.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Lady Suffolk, I dare say if you will have a little patience the King will treat you as he does the other ladies, and I suppose that would satisfy you.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'No, Madam.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Why, did you never see him show what you call resentment to the Duchess of Richmond and Lady Albemarle?'*

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I believe those ladies have more merit than I, and in every respect [are] of greater consequence; but this case is very different. They have not lived twenty

* Lady Anne (b. 1703), daughter of Charles Lennox, first Duke of Richmond, married in 1723 William Anne Keppel, second Earl of Albemarle (1702–1754).

years conversing with his Majesty every day, nor had the same reason to think themselves honoured with his friendship, nor has it been in his power to give so public or remarkable [an] instance of his displeasure to them. Consider, Madam, I have been absent seven weeks, return sooner than was proper for my health to do my duty in my place to your Majesty, and to show my respect to him upon his Birthday.'

"THE QUEEN: 'I heard when you were at the Bath that you did not design to come back, but I did not mind such reports.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'I heard, too, Madam, that I was not to come back, for my business was done at Court; but I knew that I had a mistress who had often told me that she was perfectly satisfied with my services. I knew that I had a King and a master and a friend whom I could not, nor ever will, suspect of any injustice, who would not punish me without I was guilty, and I know, Madam, I have done nothing; but still these reports must make me think his Majesty's public neglect could not escape any of the standers-by, and I know it was remarked to my brother, who came on Thursday morning, and asked if it was true that the King had taken no notice of me since my return from Bath.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Well, child, you know the King leaves it to me. I will answer for it that all will be as well with you as with any of the ladies, and I am sure you cannot leave my service then.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Really, Madam, I don't see any possibility of my continuing in it. I have lost what was dearer to me than anything in the world. I am to be put upon the foot of the Duchess of Richmond and Lady Albemarle, so by the public to be thought to be forgiven some great offence, because I have been your servant twenty years. No, Madam! I never will be forgiven an offence I have not committed.'

"THE QUEEN: 'You won't be forgiven! This is, indeed, the Great Horse [*i.e.*, riding the high horse]! Why, *I* am forgiven.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, your Majesty and I cannot be named together. It is a play of words for your Majesty, but a serious thing for me.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Why, Child, I am the King's subject as well as you.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, what I mean is that I cannot make your Majesty understand without you will be pleased to lay aside the Queen and put yourself in my place. After five-and-twenty years* to be ill-treated without knowing my crime, and then to stay upon the footing of Lady Albemarle.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Upon my word, Lady Suffolk, you don't consider what the world will say. For God's sake, consider your character. You leave me because the King will not be more particular to you than to others.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, as to my character, the world must have settled that long ago, whether just or unjustly. But, Madam, I believe I have never been suspected of betraying his Majesty, or of having done anything dishonest by any person whatsoever, and I defy my greatest enemy (your Majesty owns I have such) to prove anything against me, and I cannot, nor will not, submit to anything which may make that believed of me.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Oh, fie, Lady Suffolk! This is a very fine notion, a principle out of "Clelia" or of some other romance.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'This may not be a Court principle, but I believe it is a just one and a proper one for me to have.'

"THE QUEEN: 'I will send you down one. Come, you love figures! Let me persuade you 2-3. Go down think of this [*sic*]. There are people who want you out of Court, and they will be the first to drop you.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I consult nobody in this. There is no occasion.'

"THE QUEEN: 'But you cannot judge for yourself. Let me prevail. Put yourself in somebody's hands, and let them act for you. Indeed, you are too warm. You are not fit to act for yourself.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: (Repeated the same as before.)

"THE QUEEN: 'No, indeed, very respectful. But you will repent it. I cannot give you leave to go.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'When anybody can feel what I have and be so entirely me as to be the only sufferer for the advice they

* This would seem to fix the date of her arrival at Hanover as 1710.

give, I might follow the method your Majesty proposes; but as that is impossible, I must beg leave to act for myself. I wish I might know what I have been accused of. It is in my absence that I have been ruined in his Majesty's favour. At the Bath I had a thousand witnesses to my behaviour. I know my own innocence. Nobody dares tell me that to my knowledge I have ever failed in my duty in any manner.'

"THE QUEEN: 'You are a very great horse! Not dare to tell you you have been guilty!'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'No, Madam, for the Princess, your daughter, could justify my behaviour, Lord C——g,* and many more. What I meant was in regard to myself that I cannot think any wretch so abandoned to all shame as to stand in it, having the falsehood (pardon the word) shown them by such a number as was there.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Pray, Lady Suffolk, how did you live at the Bath?'

"LADY SUFFOLK: ('Here I told all. Who B[erkeley] dined, and what happened to Lord B[olingbroke].) No parties distinguished two to one.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Lady Suffolk, pray consider! Be calm!'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I beg your permission to retire. Indeed, Madam, I have not slept since I came into your house, and believe I never shall under this suspicion of guilt. Madam, will you give me leave to mention my observation, and not think me impertinent? I am sure by your looks when I assert my innocence that your Majesty knows of what I am accused.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Oh, oh! Lady Suffolk, you want to get it out of me.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I do want to stand the accusation. I am not afraid. I know it would be to the confusion of my accusers.'

"THE QUEEN: 'I will not give you leave to go. I tell you plainly, if you go to-day you go without my consent.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Madam, I beg you would reflect upon my unhappy situation. I own that after what passed, that the next time I saw his Majesty I should have dropped down if I had not gone out.'

* In the text it is "C——g," but the reference is probably to Lord Chesterfield.

"THE QUEEN: 'Well, Lady Suffolk, will you refuse me this? Stay a week longer. Won't you stay a week longer at my request?'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'Yes, Madam, I will obey you; but, as I am under his Majesty's displeasure, you will not expect my attendance, or that I come again to receive your commands.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Yes, I do, and I will see you again. Be sure you come again.'

"LADY SUFFOLK: 'I will obey your Majesty.'

"THE QUEEN: 'Hark ye, Lady Suffolk. You will come up as you used to do.'"*

Commenting on this record of the conversation between Caroline and her Groom of the Stole, Mr. D'Arcy Bedingfield Collyer has remarked that the narrative "goes far to support the belief of her friends, to which Horace Walpole refers while he dissents from it, that Lady Suffolk's connection with the King was confined to pure friendship." On the face of it, this interpretation is legitimate. Unfortunately, this record of the interview, in which she appears merely as the faithful servant of many years, respectful, dignified, outraged by neglect, is not the whole interview, but only such part of it as she wished to be handed down to posterity. It must be supplemented by the version of the Queen, conveyed not long after the occurrence, to Lord Hervey, who at last had his curiosity satisfied. "Upon her Majesty mentioning Lady Suffolk's behaviour to her upon her leaving Court," he has recorded, "I said that was a thing that had excited my curiosity more than any incident that had ever happened since my being in it; for that I could not imagine that Lady Suffolk could come to her Majesty and say, 'Madame, your husband being weary of me, I cannot possibly stay in your house or your service any longer'; and yet, if she did not say that, I could not comprehend what it was she did say. The Queen told me Lady Suffolk had not spoken her sense in those words, but that they differed little in their purport from what I imagined was impossible for her to suggest. 'Then, pray, Madam,' said I, 'may I beg to know what was your Majesty's answer?' 'I told her,' said the Queen,

* *Lothian MSS.*, 166; Add. MSS. 22627, f. 8.

' that she and I were not of an age to think of these sort of things in such a romantic way; and said, "My good Lady Suffolk, you are the best servant in the world, and, as I should be most extremely sorry to lose you, pray take a week to consider of the business, and give me your word not to read any romances in that time, and then I dare say you will lay aside all thought of doing what, believe me, you will repent, and what I am very sure I shall be very sorry for.' "*

The Queen was both glad and sorry at Lady Suffolk's retirement. Glad, because, of course, in the circumstances there had been no love lost between them; sorry, because of her dread lest the King should contract an attachment for a younger woman, who would make every effort to wield greater power. For this reason Walpole shared her Majesty's regret. If the King must have a mistress, then, in the eyes of the Queen and the Minister, Lady Suffolk was the ideal person. She had naturally desired influence, but when she found she could not secure it, she had been, if not willing, at least content to do without. She had the invaluable gift—again in the eyes of the Queen and the Minister—of perpetually irritating the King. "She was sensible, artful, and agreeable," Horace Walpole has written, "but had neither sense nor art enough to make his Majesty think her as agreeable as his wife."† It was because she was aware of this that the Queen kept her at Court, even when the King complained that he wanted to get rid of "that deaf old woman." The Queen, indeed, had a very poor opinion of Lady Suffolk as a tactician. When presently Lord Hervey said to her that he could not believe the report of Lady Suffolk's marriage with Berkeley, "*Mon Dieu*," cried her Majesty, "what an *opiniâtre* devil you are, that you will never believe what one tells you one knows to be true, because you happen not to think it possible! Perhaps you are one of those who have so high an opinion of her understanding, that you think it impossible she should do a silly thing. For my part, I have always heard a great deal of her great sense from other people, but I never saw her, in any material great occurrence in her life, take a sensible step since I knew her; her going from Court was the silliest thing she could do at that time, and this match the silliest thing

* *Memoirs*, II. 182. † *Reminiscences.*

she could do now; all her behaviour to the King whilst she was at Court was as ill-judged as her behaviour to me at leaving it."* As for the way other members of the royal family regarded the departure of Lady Suffolk from Court, Lord Hervey has recorded it with wit, humour, and truth. "The Prince [of Wales], I believe, wished Lady Suffolk removed, as he would have wished anybody detached from the King's interest; and, added to this, Lady Suffolk having many friends, it was a step that he hoped would make his father many enemies; neither was he sorry, perhaps, to have so eminent a precedent for a prince discarding a mistress he was tired of," he wrote. "The Princess Emily wished Lady Suffolk's disgrace because she wished misfortune to most people; the Princess Caroline, because she thought it would please her mother. The Princess Royal was violently for having her crushed; and when Lord Hervey said he wondered she was so desirous to have this lady's disgrace pushed to such extremity, she replied, 'Lady Suffolk's conduct with regard to politics has been so impertinent that she cannot be too ill-used'; and when Lord Hervey intimated the danger there might be, from the King's coquetry of some more troublesome and powerful successor, she said (not very judiciously with regard to her mother, nor very respectfully with regard to her father), 'I wish with all my heart he would take someone else, that mamma might be a little relieved from the ennui of seeing him for ever in her room.' At the same time the King was always bragging how dearly his daughter Anne loved him."† Lady Suffolk's resignation came as a surprise to most of her intimates.

Lord Bathurst to the Countess of Suffolk

"The Peak,
"November 26, 1734.

"I did not give credit to what I saw in the newspapers till I had it confirmed under the hand of a friend of ours; he writes me word, at the same time, that you expected a letter from me. I take for granted it ought to be a letter of condolence, for it is a sad thing, without doubt, to be removed from

* Hervey: *Memoirs*, II. 184. † *Memoirs*, II. 90.

the sunshine of the Court to the melancholy shades of privacy and retirement, especially to those who have made an ill use of favour, and have employed it only to gratify their own private resentments: I do not know that has been altogether your case. But what good have you done to any body? Believe me there are but very few who will take the will for the deed. Some few odd-headed simpletons may have that way of thinking, but all the *beau-monde*, that used to crowd about your toilets, will avoid you as if you had got the plague; and to be reduced to live within the circle of one's friends, would be to most people a most dismal retreat. I am much of opinion that a certain great man [Walpole], who has now by far the greatest *levées* of any subject in England, would find it difficult, after laying down his post, to make up a party at quadrille, if he resolved to play only with three personal friends. Now, to comfort you, madam, I dare answer for it you will be able to do something more; and, in my opinion, there must be some satisfaction in discovering who were friends to one's person, and who to one's fortune, which you could never have found out without this change. Perhaps you will not believe it, but it is literally true, that the sun shines, even here where I am, above one hundred miles from London; and that there are men and women walking upon two legs, just as they do about St. James's, only they seem to stand steadier upon them: they can talk, too, only it is in a different dialect, and for my part I like it better. A great king, who happened to be a philosopher, could find out nothing more to be desired in human life, than these four things—old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to converse with, and old books to read; you may be sure of enjoying all these, and the third of them (which I suppose he thought the most valuable), in a more perfect degree than *his Majesty or his Queen*.

"I am now besieged by snow, but I hope soon to make a sortie, and force my way up to London, and my first business will be to pay my respects to you, and to assure you that I am, with the utmost esteem and regard,

"Yours, etc.,

"Bathurst."*

The Duchess of Queensberry to the Countess of Suffolk

"Amesbury,

"November, 1734.

"I writ you word by the post, in answer to yours, that I was not in the least surprised at the newspapers, and gave you

*Add. MSS. 22626, f. 19.

my reasons ; but I was indeed surprised at your retiring so on a sudden, and am afraid you took your resolution on some very shocking provocation : this I am confident of, that you gave none ; and, from that, I hope I may depend on it that you do not suffer yourself to have the least uneasiness ; there are few things worth it, and to those who are thoroughly in the wrong (be they little or great) nothing but contempt is due. I take the opportunity of sending this by Lady Anne Finch, for my heart is full, and I think I have a vast deal to say to you ; but it is now so late that you must comprehend all I think by these few words, which I swear is true—that I love you. I must add one other truth, though it can tend to nothing but to tell my mind, viz., that I am heartily sorry that our house is at present engaged, or it would have been entirely at your service ; but I hope you will soon meet with one to your mind, for I imagine you will not like to continue at your present abode much longer. Wherever you are, may God bless and preserve you 'from envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness ;' I wish you could and would like to come and pass some time here. I am sure I should like it, and do all in my power to make you not dislike it ; but I will wish nothing, for fear it should not agree with yours : this I have the vanity to imagine cannot disagree, that I wish extremely ever to have in my power to convince you, my dear Lady Suffolk, how very sincerely, faithfully, and affectionately, I am,

"Yours, etc.,
"C. Q."*

THE HON. MRS. ROBERT SAWYER HERBERT TO THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

[November, 1734.]

"I can neither express my surprise nor concern for the news you write me, but since the thing is over I heartily wish you may make yourself easier, though I know it must be a very hard struggle to get over, from the certain knowledge I have of your sincere respect to his Majesty, which must make it very shocking to think he should imagine you could be guilty of anything wrong to him, that I am so sure you could have died with pleasure to have served. May he always be served by people that love him as well, and may you be cleared is the sincere wish of, my dear Lady Suffolk,

"Your most obedient and affectionate servant,
"M. HERBERT.

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 78.

"Mr. Herbert and Lady Mary beg their compliments and pretend to be as sorry as I am, but that can not be."*

The general feeling among Lady Suffolk's friends was on the whole of pleasure that she had her liberty. "As to the question whether you should congratulate or condole," Lady Betty Germaine wrote to Swift, April 5, 1735, "I believe you may do either or both, and not be in the wrong: for I truly think she was heartily sorry to be obliged, by ill-usage, to quit a master and mistress that she had served so justly and loved so well. However, she has now much more ease and liberty, and accordingly her health is better.† It is not on record, however, that the Dean wrote to Lady Suffolk.

In respect of her retirement from Court, Lady Suffolk's circle affected to see in her the injured innocent, much to the amusement, it must be confessed, of the onlookers. "When she left the King, tired of acting the mistress while she had in reality all the slights of a wife, and no interest with him," Horace Walpole has recorded, "the Opposition affected to cry up her virtue and the obligations which the King had to her for consenting to seem his mistress, while in reality she had confined him to mere friendship—a ridiculous pretence, as he was the last man in the world to have a taste for talking sentiment, and that with a woman who was deaf."‡ This is corroborated by Lord Hervey. "To have heard Lady Suffolk's friends, or rather the King's enemies, comment on this transaction," Lord Hervey wrote at the time, "one would have imagined that the King, instead of dropping a mistress to give himself up entirely to a wife, had repudiated some virtuous, obedient, and dutiful wife in order to abandon himself to the dissolute commerce and dangerous sway of some new favourite."§

Lady Suffolk never again appeared at St. James's, nor did she ever see the Queen, who survived her departure only by two years. The King she saw once more, by accident. "Two days before George II. died," Horace Walpole wrote to George Montagu, "she went to make a visit at Kensington, not knowing

* Add. MSS. *22627*, f. 77.

† Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 263.

‡ *Reminiscences.* § *Memoirs*, II. 94.

of the review ; she found herself hemmed in by coaches, and was close to him, whom she had not seen for so many years, and to my Lady Yarmouth ; but they did not know her : it struck her, and has made her very sensitive to his death."*

* *Letters* (ed. Cunningham).

CHAPTER XV

LADY SUFFOLK'S SECOND MARRIAGE

1735–1746

Lady Suffolk announces her marriage with the Hon. George Berkeley—Much surprise occasioned thereby—Lord Hervey curious as to the reasons of this "unaccountable piece of folly"—George II.'s comment on the news—A marriage of affection—Congratulatory letters—The marriage of Henry, tenth Earl of Suffolk—Lady Suffolk (now the Dowager Lady Suffolk) visits Lord Cobham at Stowe—Her correspondence with Berkeley during her absence—William Pitt—His opposition to Walpole—He is dismissed from the army—His letter to Berkeley—Lady Suffolk and her husband go abroad—They visit the Duke and Duchess of Richmond and Lord and Lady Bolingbroke—Lady Suffolk's town residence—Marble Hill—"The two co-Chamberses"—Anne Chambers marries Richard Grenville, afterward Lord Temple—Mary Chambers marries Lord Vere Beauclerk—The Elections of 1741—Berkeley offers himself again for Heydon—His correspondence from Heydon with his wife—He is not returned at the poll—He petitions against the successful candidates for bribery—Lady Suffolk's love of children—Her son Henry, tenth Earl of Suffolk—She adopts her niece Dorothy Hobart—Her affection for her nephew John—His playful letters to her—The death of Berkeley.

BEFORE people had entirely recovered from the surprise occasioned by the retirement of Lady (since May, owing to her son's marriage, the Dowager Countess of) Suffolk from Court, came the announcement of her marriage with the Hon. George Berkeley. This was announced in July, 1735, but a sentence in Lord Bolingbroke's letter of congratulation to the bridegroom on this auspicious event—"I hear that your marriage with Lady Suffolk is declared"—gives rise to suspicion that the ceremony had taken place somewhat earlier.

Lord Hervey, after remarking that Berkeley was "neither young, handsome, healthy, nor rich," expresses curiosity as to the causes which "induced Lady Suffolk's prudence to deviate into this unaccountable piece of folly," and he appears satisfied

that it must have been the result of a desire either to pique the King or to persuade the world that her relations with his Majesty had been innocent.* It is, however, unlikely that, after having lived with more or less of complacency for so many years under the cloud of suspicion, Lady Suffolk should make so belated an attempt to clear her reputation. Certainly, if it was her wish to distress the King, she failed, except in so far as he was somewhat annoyed that she should enter into the bonds of matrimony with one who had been constantly in Opposition. " J'étois extrèmement surpris de la disposition que vous avez mandé que ma vieille maîtresse a fait de son corps en mariage à ce vieux goutteux George Berkeley, et je m'en réjouis fort," he wrote from Hanover to the Queen. " Je ne voudrois pas faire de tels presins à mes amis ; et quand mes ennemis me volent, plut à Dieu que ce soit toujours de cette façon."†

Though Lord Hervey himself had married for love, he was far too cynical to believe that any other matrimonial alliance could proceed from such a feeling. Yet if this middle-aged couple did not marry for love, at least they were inspired by a strong feeling of affection. In fact, the question is settled once for all by Lady Betty Germaine's letter to Swift. " She is indeed four or five years older than he," she wrote on July 12 ; " but for all that my brother has appeared to the world, as well as to me, to have long had (that is, ever since she has been a widow, so pray do not misunderstand me) a most violent passion for her, as well as esteem and value for her numberless good qualities."‡ This is the more understandable because it has frequently been asserted that Lady Suffolk still retained (and preserved almost to the close of her long life) the peculiar charm for which she had been distinguished in her youth.

Lady Betty was not the only one to approve of the marriage : a rain of congratulatory letters was showered upon the happy pair. " Do me the justice to believe that I rejoice in your joy, and that I wish you both a long and uninterrupted scene of felicity," Lord Bolingbroke wrote to Berkeley ; and Lady Hervey, addressing her old friend, said : " I wish Mr. Berkeley and you both all the joy imaginable. Pray be happy, for if you

* *Memoirs*, II. 183. † *Memoirs*, II. 183.

‡ Swift : *Works* (ed. Scott).

THE HON. MRS. HOWARD, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.
From an engraving by G. Scriven at the British Museum.

[*To face p* 246.

should not, it would be very difficult to decide on which to lay the blame, though one of you would be most excessively in the wrong."* Not less enthusiastic and complimentary was Lord Lovell. "*Jacta est alea*, my dearest cousin and brother-married man, I heartily wish you joy; and I think my letter better timed than those that come at first: *then* wishing joy is superfluous—after the honeymoon is over, it comes *à propos*," he wrote to Berkeley, July 23, 1735. "But in the choice you have made, where the most agreeable beauties of the mind are joined to those of the body, wishing joy (where it already is and must last) is at any time a mere ceremony. I should, however, have done it sooner had I known you were become one of *us*, which I did not until I heard it by the gentlemen at Houghton. . . . Adieu: I will not take up more of your time, only to remind you, it is unusual for married men, after a short interval, to visit their uncle: if you thought visiting a cousin might do as well, I should be most glad to see you here; and now you have taken the cares of the world and a family upon you, it is likely the country may be better relished than it would have been when you were a *beau*."†

How thoroughly Lady Suffolk appreciated the affection that was showered on her, and how successful the marriage was, is evident by her correspondence with her husband, when she left him for a few days to pay a long-promised visit to Lord Cobham at Stowe. One of these letters, it will be observed is signed, "H. Berkeley," but this new signature was quickly abandoned.

THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"Stratton Street,
"August 30, 1735.

"The moment your Ladyship was gone, I went to bed—lay half an hour—disliked it extremely—got up again; never found Marble Hill so disagreeable; waited with impatience till ten o'clock, when the boat came and carried me to London. London mightily altered for the worse, though Lady Betty [Germaine] is in town, and very angry with you for not being there too. She stays till Wednesday se'nnight. The post was come

* Add. MSS. 22628, f. 37. † Add. MSS. 22628, f. 89.

in before I left Twickenham, but no letters for our family. Lord and Lady Pembroke set out for Wilton to-morrow; they go by the way of Highclere. I am told there are some small hopes of Lord Lempster's* doing well. I have sent your letter to Lady Bristol's house. Overleaf shall be all about business, which I am afraid I have performed very ill. . . .

"I hope this will find you in better health than when you left me, and then I beg of you, for my sake, take more than usual care of yourself.

"My best compliments to Lord and Lady Cobham,† Mrs. Blount, Mr. Pitt,‡ etc., etc."§

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Stowe,

"September 2, 1735.

"I am not sorry you disliked Marble Hill, and I am very glad that you found London so *changed*—I hope you will find me as much so, but strangely to my advantage: for Baron Sparre‖ affirms I look better than I did seventeen years ago, and Lord Cobham says I am the best-looking woman of *thirty* that he ever saw. These compliments have entirely cured my head-ache. I will follow your advice strictly; and expect, as I have now told you the method that is proper to keep me in health, that you will repeat the doses as often as is necessary. I came in last night, though very warm and very fine, because the dew fell; and I shall in time give you many such proofs of my prudence, in obedience to your commands. Baron Sparre consults Mrs. Blount as a physician; he tells her . . . and concludes himself dying, though I believe he was never in better health. We expect Pope to-morrow; he seems not pleased (by a letter he wrote to Lord Cobham) that I did not wait his return, that I might have brought him hither. I know I shall be pleased with everything you have done, let the consequence be never so different from what ought to be expected. But you must give me leave to observe, my back is no sooner turned than you

* George Fermor (1722–1785), known under the style of Lord Lempster until 1753, when he succeeded his father as (second) Earl of Pomfret.

† Anne, daughter of Edmund Halsey, of Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, married Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham.

‡ William Pitt (1708–1778), afterwards the first Earl of Chatham.

§ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 39.

‖ Baron Sparre was the Swedish Minister at the Court of St. James's.

run among lawyers, or, what is just the same thing, make them come to you.

"God bless you, and forgive you! I do with all my heart and soul, nor do I yet repent that I am,

"H. Berkeley.

"All here desire their compliments to you.

"Order the horses to be at Winslow for Saturday. I shall set out very early from Lord Cobham's. The saddle-horses must be at the same place, and all there, I hope, on Friday night."*

The Dowager Countess of Suffolk to the Hon. George Berkeley

"Stowe,
"September, 1735.

"I shall be satisfied with any horses you send; for I propose setting out so very early, that I hope to be with you before it is dark on Saturday next, though the horses should be no better than those that brought me.

"I continue very well. I am never in bed at seven in the morning, nor out of it half an hour past ten at night. Mr. Pope came here yesterday, and just now six people are come to see Mrs. Blount; they are neighbours to Lord Cobham, but do not visit; so that it puts his Lordship into a little distress, and me into a good deal of confusion. So I retired under the pretence of writing. This by way of excuse to you for my sending this letter, when you are to have the author the day after you receive it.

"I have not heard one word how often Madam Pitt and you meet in my absence; I do not like this silence; but at your peril; she has a brother; I say no more. I am sorry paper was so scarce, but I give you warning that you will not want an old Frenchwoman this month. I have learnt all the theory of cricket, and have some thoughts of practising this afternoon. Your conclusion is very proper for me, if you will multiply it by ten. To-morrow is Friday, and then comes Saturday, and till then adieu."†

The Hon. George Berkeley to the Dowager Countess of Suffolk

"September, 1735.

"*Writing* pro and con, to my taste is nothing comparable to *talking* pro and con. I have a great deal to say to you, though nothing from Norfolk. If any letter from thence directed to

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 40. † Add. MSS. 22629, f. 43.

Marble Hill should come to my hands this night before twelve o'clock, I will certainly forward it to Stowe; a place I shall hate, if it keeps you from me, and doth not cure your headache. I am sorry the horses performed so ill. If you would have me hire the horses to bring you back at any other place, I shall be very willing; for when you are coming to me, I think you cannot make too much haste. . . .

"I miss you even more than I thought I should,—I cannot express it stronger. Heaven preserve you!"*

William Pitt, later to be known as "The Great Commoner," whom Lady Suffolk met at Stowe, became a friend of hers and of her husband. He had in 1731 obtained a cornetcy in Lord Cobham's Horse, and four years later was returned to Parliament, in succession to his elder brother Robert, for the family borough of Old Sarum. He at once threw in his lot with the Opposition, and his satirical speech in April, 1736, on Pulteney's motion for a congratulatory Address to the King on the marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha so angered Walpole, that, at his instance, the young man was in the following month dismissed from the army.

WILLIAM PITT TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"London,
"June 7, 1736.

"I had often been told, I was obliged to Sir Robert [Walpole] for honouring me with so distinguished a mark of his resentment; but I never thoroughly felt the obligation till I received the favour of your letter. I should not be a little vain to be the object of the hatred of a Minister, hated even by those who call themselves his friends. I am infinitely so, to think myself in any degree the object of the esteem of a man so dear to everyone who has the happiness to be his friend, and so highly esteemed by everyone who is not so. I feel very warmly how valuable is the acquisition of your friendship; the share you allow me in it is the surest means for me to acquire, and the only one by which I can ever come to deserve, the esteem of the world, and attain in any degree the worth or talents you are now willing to suppose in me. What I here say to you I say from the abundance of a heart full of gratitude for the kind concern you take in my situation. I find it hard to tell you half what I feel; I only beg, as you think a great deal too highly of my talents, that you

* *Ibid.*, f. 42.

will not refuse me the single one to which I have any title, that of knowing how to set a just value upon the honour and happiness of my Lady Suffolk's and your friendship. I am mighty glad French air agrees with you both, and hope you will bring back more health than even English climate can affect. I say nothing of my sister, who, I believe, speaks for herself by this same post."*

When this letter was written Berkeley and his wife were abroad. "My brother George and Lady Suffolk," Lady Betty Germaine wrote to Swift, June 23, 1736, "are gone to France to make a visit to Lord Berkeley; which I am glad of, as I hope it will induce her to go to Spa and Aix-la-Chapelle for her health, which I am afraid is very necessary for her, and truly believe is all she wants to make her easy and happy; or else my brother George is not the honest good-natured man I take him to be; and she dissembles well, if she is not so happy as she makes me believe, and I heartily wish her."† They were at Spa in July,‡ and during their rambles on the Continent visited the Duke and Duchess of Richmond at Aubigné, and either there met Lord and Lady Bolingbroke,§ or went to them at their seat at Chanteloup in Touraine.

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO ANN PITT

"Spa,
"August 5, 1736.

"That you may no more reproach me with saying nothing of myself, I design to talk of nothing else in this letter. To begin; I left Paris Monday was three weeks, and got to Aix-la-Chapelle the Sunday following. On the Tuesday, I began those waters as they are called, but in reality I drank eight and a half pints of rotten eggs very hot, and well salted, every morning; which sat as light as a feather upon my stomach. I rose at five o'clock, breakfasted at one, supped at half an hour after eight, and was in bed before ten. There was no company (except one lady that I was acquainted with both at Hanover and in

* Add. MSS. 22626, f. 118.

† Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), XVIII. 448.

‡ *Ibid.*, 463.

§ Marie Claire de Deschamps de Mareilly (1665?–1750), a cousin of Madame de Maintenon, and the second wife of the Marquis de Vilette (d. 1705). Bolingbroke's first wife died in 1718, and two years later he married the Marquise.

England). I was always in spirits, and always well, although everybody told me that I drank these waters in a most dangerous season, meaning the dog-days; but, if it were not for the name of dog-days, it might have been winter for most of the time that I was there. But you must know they govern themselves in this country according as the seasons are called, without any regards to heat or cold. I arrived here last Friday, where I found the place swarming with English, and most Jacobites; here is the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, Lord Lonsdale and his brother, Mr. and Mrs. Pulteney, the Duke of Buckingham, Mr. Herbert, Mr. Nugent, Lord Cornberry, who gave me a letter from you, Lord Scarborough, who brought me one from Lady Betty Germaine, Mr. and Mrs. Digby, Mrs. Pryce, and ten thousand more. But as the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry and I have made some new acquaintances, I fancy you will not dislike to hear who they are that you may happen to meet at breakfast at Savile Row; Mrs. Grub, Mrs. Qualm, and Mrs. Cowsmaker, and Mr. Cabbage will enliven our tea-table very much. I live the same life here that I did at Aix; and if Mrs. Hobart had not been ordered to drink the water of the town, and that she began yesterday, and that I had a mind to see how they agreed with her, I should have been this morning upon the hill at six o'clock—and could not have written to you, for it's most certainly true that it is not possible to write when one drinks these waters. But as one leaves them off for two days every fourteen days, you will hear from me every such opportunity. . . . Mr. Berkeley began the waters to-day; he drank those of Aix and bathed, which I really think agreed with him; but they say both was bold for a gouty man; but no other ways so than as it might give him a fit of the gout, for, in other respects, it was very proper for him. We propose being in England in the middle of September."*

On her retirement from Court Lady Suffolk had "purchased a large house of Mr. Gray, the builder, in Savile Street, Burlington Gardens, for £3,000."† The mansion, No. 17 Savile Street, soon after known as Savile Row, one of a pile of buildings erected on Lord Burlington's property after a plan designed by the owner, who named the thoroughfare after his wife, Lady Dorothy Savile,‡ was Lady Suffolk's town residence to the end. "I went to my Lady Suffolk's in Savile Row," Walpole wrote to the Rev. William Cole, April 28, 1761, "and passed the whole

* *Fortescue MSS.*, I. 105. † *Daily Courant*, February 21, 1735.
‡ *Daily Post*, March 12, 1733.

night till three in the morning, between her little hot bed-chamber and the spot [of a fire in Vigo Street] up to my ankles in water, without catching cold."* The headquarters of Lady Suffolk and her husband were at Marble Hill, where she spent as much time as she possibly could, trying to make up for the years of enforced absence from her home consequent upon her duties at St. James's. "I have exercised hospitality plentifully these twenty days, having entertained many of mine, and some of Lady Suffolk's friends," Pope wrote to William Fortescue, August, 1735. "There is a greater Court now at Marble Hill than at Kensington, and God knows where it will end."† At Marble Hill on May 9, 1737, the marriage took place of Berkeley's niece, Anne, daughter of Thomas Chambers, of Hanworth, Middlesex, by his wife, Lady Mary Berkeley, to Richard Grenville, afterwards first Earl Temple. Anne was the younger of "the two co-Chamberses," as George Berkeley called them in allusion to their being co-heiresses: the elder, Mary, whose fortune was vastly more than the £40,000 at which it was estimated by popular rumour, had the previous year married Lord Vere Beauclerk.‡

When the dissolution of Parliament in 1741 was in sight, Berkeley, the sitting member, and Lord Mountrath, accompanied by William Chetwynd, went to canvas Heydon, a borough, in Pulteney's interest.

LADY BETTY GERMAINE TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Savile Row, London,
"March 28, 1741.

"I hope my dear George won't be extremely alarmed at seeing my hand instead of Lady Suffolk's, for at present it is laudanum only hinders her writing. Since you went she has been rather worse, and as she told you she would, did send for Dr. Burton, who says positively it is a rheumatism, and whilst this cursed wind lasts she cannot be long easy, and nothing but great quantities of laudanum can be of any use to her, which is the way he cured my Lady Frederick and Mrs. Howard, who

* *Letters* (ed. Cunningham).

† *Works* (ed. Elwin and Courthope), IX. 130.

‡ Lord Vere Beauclerk, third son of Charles, first Duke of St. Albans, a Lord of the Admiralty, 1737–1749; created Lord Vere of Hanworth, 1750. The son of this marriage succeeded as (fifth) Duke of St. Albans.

lives in the same street. You know my *non credos*, and how I love hunting dead lies, though not living creatures; so my Lord Hobart and I agreed upon his lordship's waiting upon Mrs. Howard to find how far we might depend on the doctor's veracity; and in fact Mrs. Howard's description of herself agreed exactly with Lady Suffolk's. Mrs. Howard says she has had all the doctors in town, been physicked with mercury, blistered, and blooded, but nothing gave her a moment's ease but laudanum, and that made her perspire violently, and she has now been free from it these three weeks. However, Dr. Burton has put a blister behind Lady Suffolk's ear, and I see it has drawn a great deal, and as there is no *pain*, he designs to keep it on; and I must own I cannot help fancying it is that has done her good, for she had been very uneasy all night and this morning, though she had taken rather more laudanum than usual, slept very little, but since dinner is easier, and has been fast asleep from five till now, which is near nine; so lest she not wake time enough to write, I venture to give you the alarm of seeing my fair hand, imagining it will be a less uneasiness than not hearing anything of her.

"Dowager Duchess of St. Albans* has been dying, as her children thought; the Duke and Lord Vere [Beauclerk] hurried away to Windsor last Thursday, and Lady Vere is gone there to-day, and she is now better. Our journey to the Bath holds for next Tuesday, and I hope you are the better for yours. Pray give my love to brother Will [Chetwynd],† and tell him it is rather stronger than ordinary towards him, for his goodness in going with you; for though, to be sure, Parson Head is the best of company, yet if you should not be well, I should not have chosen him in the capacity of a nurse too these godly times. I have seen nobody: so, whether the whole French fleet is destroyed, and the Duke of Lorraine chosen emperor, this deponent knoweth it not.

"God bless my dear George for ever."‡

* The widow of Charles Beauclerk, first Duke of St. Albans, who died in 1726.

† William Richard Chetwynd (1685?–1770), third son of John Chetwynd, of Ridge, in Staffordshire. He entered Parliament in 1714, and was a Lord of the Admiralty, 1717–1727. He was not returned to the House of Commons in 1727, but was elected for Stafford in 1734. He held the lucrative office of Master of the Mint, 1744–1749. He survived his two brothers, and in 1767 succeeded them as (third) Viscount Chetwynd. He was very popular in society, and was known as "Black Will" and "Oroonoko Chetwynd," nicknames suggested by his dark complexion, and also as "Brother Will."

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 45.

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

" Savile Row, London,
" April 3, 1741.

" I have had a very good night, and have quite left off laudanum, and find myself so well, that nothing but prudence keeps me at home: the wind is changed, and if it continues favourable till Sunday I shall go abroad.

" Here is a vast deal of good news in town from our fleets, but the ways it is brought keeps the wise in suspense; one part has gained credit on all sides, that is, that three of the caraccas [*i.e.*, Spanish Guard-]ships have been taken; but it is the complete victory said to be gained by Admiral Vernon, in conjunction with Sir Chaloner Ogle,* over the Spanish and French fleet, that is so much doubted of. . . .

" Friday night, April 3.

" I have just got two letters from you, my dear George; one from the banks of the Humber, the other from Heydon; this last gives me almost as much uneasiness as Lady Betty [Germaine]'s did you. My only hopes are in Mr. Chetwynd, that he prevailed on you to stay till my letter of Tuesday last could reach you at Heydon. I think this argument must be strong, that if you did not wait for one post day, you must resolve on passing your whole journey without knowing whether I was dead or alive; and as I calculate the time, you could not possibly wait above two days for the post that would bring my letter, which I am sure would make you easy. Depending much on *brother Will*, I am determined to send this. Thursday's letter will be still more comfortable, and if you stay to receive this, you may be certain I was never better in my whole life. For God's sake, do not stir from Heydon till your affairs are settled to your satisfaction. You do not tell me a word of either your hopes or fears; and I assure you the success of your negotiation has employed my thoughts, and uncertainty exercised my patience for some days past. Mr. Pulteney has this moment sent me word that you will be soon in town; but I still flatter myself you are at Heydon. I am well, going to bed, and shall finish my letter to-morrow.

* The reduction of Carthagena by the fleet under Admiral Sir Edward Vernon (1684–1757) and Sir Chaloner Ogle (see p. 108), the official accounts of which were not received until May 18.

"Saturday morning, April 4.

"I have had a very good night, but had dreams of my dear George and Heydon election. I find that I shall fret most exceedingly if I should be the occasion of any omission in this affair. . . . I have taken *leave* of my doctor; I believe I should say he took *his* of me. The medicines he has ordered are to be continued a fortnight, but do not confine me. Miss [Ann] Pitt was the whole day with me; the Duchess of Queensberry is just gone out of the room without having sat down in it; proposed carrying Miss Hobart* to the play, which was refused, as any favour of that kind always shall be. Mrs. Herbert is constantly with me every day; Mrs. Grenville,† Lady Betty [Germaine], nor my brother, had not left me (if I may judge by their goodness when here) had I not been much better.

"Saturday afternoon.

"Lord Strafford‡ is returned; Mr. Gravencop has been with me to-day, very much yours and *brother Will's* humble servant: he speaks very well of the young man. The Duke of Argyll has been with me an hour *tête-à-tête*. I find, should I indulge myself in it, I could write nonsense for two hours. I shall not seal this till nine at night; but if I add nothing more, you may depend on my being then perfectly well, and engaged at whist, though perhaps thinking of you."§

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"St. James's,
"April 4, 1741.

"Yesterday was a public breakfast, and you were not forgot; to-day was a *tête-à-tête*, and you made a very good figure in a key of near two hours; it was then resolved to keep our word, and convince you that there were women of honour, if you would not be convinced that there were women of sense. I am not in much pain about this latter part of character, because I may indulge myself in being as impertinent as ever I please, without any fears of your being surprised.

"Mrs. Herbert thinks that my little family is a very proper subject for your entertainment; that you ought to be informed that Miss Hobart and I are upon very ill terms; that Master

* Miss Hobart, Lady Suffolk's niece. See p. 264.

† Mrs. Richard Grenville, Berkeley's niece.

‡ William Wentworth, second Earl of Strafford (1722–1791), who succeeded his father (see p. 108) in the title, 1739.

§ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 47.

Hobart,* for whom, I know, you have the greatest tenderness, we suspect has quarrelled with his musical playfellow ; and that Miss Bedingfield,† who used to command her passion, was very much ruffled this morning. You remember that the night before you went I was under great apprehensions that her little companion would engage her in an affair very improper for her ; but I do think it is now perfectly well settled without her knowing anything of it. I hope you may be able to give us as edifying and as amusing an account of your travels as I have done of all these great affairs, if the want of spruce beer has not impaired your understanding as much as the use of that and of the waters has enlivened mine. But whether I really am sprightly or dull, sick or well, pleased or displeased, I am truly and sincerely,

" Yours, etc.,
" H. Suffolk."‡

The Hon. George Berkeley to the Dowager Countess of Suffolk

" Lincoln,
" April 5, 1741.

" Greatly must he love his country, who for its sake will make a journey into it, and travel from the spring at London an hundred and fifty miles into the depth of winter. I know [Mrs.] Herbert's impatience expects a journal from you of your distresses upon the road. But what can she hope for from people not encumbered with hoop-petticoats and band-boxes ! It is true, like reasonable men, we carried all sorts of useful things with us, and our coach was so heavy loaded, that we did not get into our inn till ten o'clock the first night, though we set out at five in the morning. It is as true the second night we could get no room at all in our inn, it happening to be a fair day at Grantham, and were forced to go two miles further, and take possession of Lord Tyrconnel's§ house, where we did pretty well, though his lordship was not in the country. But in setting out from thence our coachman, who is an excellent roadsman, as he was driving furiously round a paved court, took a fancy to fall off his box, and pitch upon his head ; but

* John Hobart, afterwards second Earl of Buckinghamshire, Lady Suffolk's nephew.

† Miss Bedingfield, probably a distant connection of Lady Suffolk, was the governess or companion of Miss Hobart.

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 49.

§ Sir John Brownlow, of Humby, Bart. (1693–1754), created Viscount Tyrconnel, 1718.

being a man, and of course having a good head, it did not much hurt him, only damaged the pavement a little, and made us lose half a day, which caused us to lie at this place, where we have had the pleasure of a visit from Lord Deloraine, who seems very much heated with the *country interest* and Lincoln ale. Indeed, we have never been alone, not so much as in the coach, for we have been forced to carry a servant with us all the way, because the horse which was to have met him the first stage from London was forgot. All these things, with a little scurvy pain in my foot, though to no great degree, have put me into such a humour, that if the interest where I am going is not very good, I shall in all probability go near to spoil it. But with all my misfortunes, let me hear often from dear Lady Suffolk that she is in perfect health, and I will own it is possible to be extremely pleased in the country."*

THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE DOWAGER LADY SUFFOLK

"Heydon,
"April 9, 1741.

"If you expect to be entertained with any more grievances of mine, you have disappointed yourself, for I am really so delighted with hearing from you, that I defy all the corporations, mayors, aldermen, and burgesses in Europe, to put me out of humour; for talk what they will of the north, when I know I am in Lady Suffolk's thoughts, I am in the place of the world where I most wish to be. Giving me an account of your own family was very obliging, for what relates so nearly to you must interest me. Besides, it gives me an opportunity of saying (without much impertinence) what I have long thought, that you should, for Miss Hobart's sake, begin your office of rebuker with her. I was always apprehensive she might learn ill tricks from Mrs. Bedingfield, and that keeping such constant company with that paralytic woman might in time make her shake herself, if you did not prevent that bad habit. As for my schoolfellow Jack [*i.e.*, Master Hobart], quarrel with whom he will, I know he is in the right, and uses them as they deserve.

"I have behaved so ill at this place, that they are glad to be rid of me, and do not insist upon my staying here longer than Tuesday next, and I may hope to drink a bottle of spruce with you on Saturday night. If you or [Mrs.] Herbert have honoured me with another letter, which I have not the assurance to hope, it will not come while I am here, but be returned

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 50.

to me at London; so [Lord] Lovell will have the pleasure of reading it twice before I have seen it once. If Lady Tankerville* said any thing to my disparagement at the public breakfast, pray tell her she had better padlock up her mouth than open it to so little purpose.

"I dined this day with Mr. Bethel, High Sheriff of this county, and ate of a salad composed of cos-lettuce as fine as can grow, except at Marble-Hill. I think this epistle as much as you can expect, and am much afraid a great deal more than you desire, from one who has been smoking with a Mayor and Aldermen till twelve at night, and the post to go out by seven in the morning."†

THE DOWAGER LADY SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Savile Row, London,
"April 18, 1741.

"My head is pretty easy, but my charming face, which, to be sure, gives pain to others, now fully revenges their quarrel. But I have yet resisted laudanum: how long my resolution will hold, God knows, for the temptation is at this moment very strong. I have one with myself, and would be indulged in asking you a few questions. How has the east wind and a long journey agreed with you? How is your ankle? How agree your fellow-travellers? Do not you wish for *brother Will*?‡ And how often have you thought of me?

"Mrs. Herbert is here: if I get easy, we go out together. Miss [Ann] Pitt tells me she will pass some time with me at Marble Hill. She and Lady Cardigan§ go to Spa; a very sudden resolution, yet I *believe* it will take place; I *believe* you think so too. Mrs. Herbert hopes you will not be brought up by a warrant from my lord chief justice, as Mr. M[eynell] has been. My opinion is, if you do not make as much haste as your affairs give leave, you will be visited by a more dreadful officer than any the law produces—an incensed wife."‖

* Camille, daughter of Edward Colville, of Whitehouse, Durham, married Charles Bennet, second Earl of Tankerville (d. 1753).

† Add. MSS. 22629, f. 51.

‡ William Chetwynd had left Heydon for Stafford, for which borough he was returned to Parliament.

§ Lady Elizabeth Bruce, eldest daughter of Thomas, third Earl of Elgin and second Earl of Aylesbury, married George Brudenell, third Earl of Cardigan (d. 1732).

‖ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 52.

THE DOWAGER LADY SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Marble Hill,
"April 23, 1741.

"I got here yesterday at three o'clock. Miss [Ann] Pitt came with me; and Miss Hobart arrived about eight, extremely pleased with her expedition and the politeness of the Duke of Dorset, Lady Vere, etc. I had left John Porter to wait till the post came in, and about ten I received two letters from you, one of the 18th, from Stilton, the other of the 20th, from Lincoln. I was glad to find poor Harriot [*i.e.*, herself] was not forgot, and I am now resolved to be very good. I have had no *pain* these two days, and do not deign to mention the word pain during your absence, and reserve all complaints till I have you present to see how they operate upon you. Mr. Meynell was the name that puzzled you and your fellow-travellers; but I am as much in the dark, and as desirous to be enlightened what it was Mr. P[ulteney] suspected, and the Heydon wives never complain of. Pray instruct me. I hope your ramble will divert you; the other business of your journey, as I am informed, is not likely to do it. Your opposers left London on Sunday last, but I hope you got to Heydon before them. I designed a long letter, and my little girl would have been a copious subject, but the post is just going, that is, it is six o'clock. Which of my children did you design to bless? I hope both, for really both deserve it. Miss Pitt's compliments, and my duty, affection, inclination, and interest, make me, my dear,

"Yours, etc.,
"H. S."*

THE DOWAGER LADY SUFFOLK TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

"Marble Hill,
"April 24, 1741.

"Though I am very fond of this place, I do allow it will not afford much for your amusement at a distance; and shall plead this as my undoubted right to be more dull (if that is possible) than when I wrote from London. I pass my hours as much to my satisfaction as I ought to expect when you are in Yorkshire, for my *three*† children flatter me all the day,

* *Ibid.*, f. 54.

† Evidently Lady Suffolk included Miss Pitt among the children: the other two were, of course, Dorothy and John Hobart.

and you know I love flattery; besides I am in perfect health, and not much out of humour, which are great helps to being pleased. I am afraid Miss Pitt will leave me next week, for the time for her journey draws near, if the King's resolution holds; but this seemed doubtful when I left the town. Lady Cardigan and Miss Pitt go on board Sir Charles Wager, but the Duke and Duchess of Bedford* in their own ship, which is a project I do not much admire.

"Saturday noon,
[April 25.]

"No letter from you. I am not angry, my dear, but much disappointed. Mr. Chetwynd and Mr. Grenville are just come in; the first called at our house, but lost his labour, I must hope I shall get two letters next post day. Mr. Chetwynd bids me tell you that the writ for Heydon will be at York on the 30th. The House is up to-day, and the parliament to be dissolved on Monday. He says the King will wait for news from Admiral Vernon, and to see the success of some elections. I wish yours was over to all your satisfaction. I expect Mr. George Grenville† to take a bed with Miss Pitt or Miss Hobart to-night, but he leaves us to-morrow to go to his election. Long Legs [Richard Grenville] keeps out of the country till two days before his comes on. God bless my dearest life. All at the Bath are well, and so they are at Marble Hill.‡

Berkeley and Lord Mountrath were rejected by the electors of Heydon, who returned Francis Chute and Luke Robinson. William Pulteney, whose interest in the borough was at stake, at once caused inquiries to be made, and, satisfied that the successful candidates had been guilty of bribery, made arrangements with his nominees to present a petition to the House of Commons to unseat them. Eventually Chute and Robinson

* John Russell, fourth Duke of Bedford (1710–1771); First Lord of the Admiralty, 1744–1748; Secretary of State, 1748–1751; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1755–1761; Lord Privy Seal, 1761–1763; President of the Council, 1763–1767. His second wife, whom he married in 1737, was Gertrude (d. 1794), eldest daughter of John Leveson-Gower, Earl Gower.

† George (1712–1770), younger brother of Richard Grenville (see p. 281), M.P. for Buckingham, 1740–1770. He was Treasurer of the Navy from 1754, with a brief interval, to 1762; Secretary of State and First Lord of the Admiralty, 1762–1763; First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1763–1765.

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 55.

were declared not duly elected, and Berkeley and Lord Mountrath took their seats in the House of Commons.

William Pulteney to the Hon. George Berkeley

" London,
" November 24, 1741.

" I have not troubled you with any letter since you have been at Bath ; my whole time having been employed with lawyers in prosecuting information in Westminster Hall, or pursuing evidence to support your petition [for Heydon] in Parliament. I think I have at present got such plain and positive proof, that there cannot be the least doubt of your success. Mr. Murray,* Mr. Bootle,† and every one else that I have consulted, are clearly of the same opinion. We have detected the whole scene of villainous corruption ; and many of your antagonist's own voters are willing to confess it, and give evidence against all the rest. We have positive proof of above threescore persons that received the ten pounds a man to vote for Robinson and Chute ; but I must not in a letter disclose any thing further. I have sent you the petition, drawn up in general terms ; which, when you have signed and returned to me, Lord Mountrath will sign likewise : but he is at present out of town, though, should he come, as he is expected, before the going out of the post, I will get him to sign it first. Whether you will think proper to come to town yourself, and solicit your friends, relations, and acquaintance to hear it at the bar of the House of Commons, and give it an early day, or whether you will only write to them, I leave to you to do as your judgment directs or your health requires. To be sure it would be better if you were upon the spot ; but I fancy it may do without, for I have found hardly any of my own acquaintance under the least difficulty of promising me their assistance, though never such stanch courtiers in other respects.

" I hope Lady Suffolk is the better for the waters. It is now six weeks since you left London, so that she must have drank them pretty near long enough.

" The whole spirit of the affair will depend on getting it heard at the bar ; write therefore strongly to everybody you think proper to solicit, but be sure such a favour is more easily obtained by a personal application.‡

* William Murray (1705–1793), afterwards first Earl of Mansfield.

† Afterwards Sir Thomas Bootle, Chancellor to Frederick, Prince of Wales.

‡ Add. MSS. 22628, f. 79.

"I know you love children," Gay once wrote to Lady Suffolk, "and love to have children with you." Of her son however, she had little joy. It seems that at first he attended a private school. "I have sent ten times to Dr. Dunster's* to enquire after your child," Margaret Bradshaw† wrote to the mother in April, 1720, "and could never be informed till this minute that he was gone from thence. I could have filled his belly sometimes with fruit and tea."‡ Subsequently Henry Howard went to Magdalene College, Cambridge, and in 1728, the year in which he came of age, he entered the House of Commons as member for Buralston. When in 1731 his father succeeded to the Earldom of Suffolk, he was styled—improperly as it has since transpired—Lord Walden. Two years later he inherited the family title and the estate of Audley End.

He seems from an early age to have passed out of Lady Suffolk's life, and from an allusion in a letter written by Pope in 1727, it is evident that his father had taken charge of him and had contrived to prejudice the lad against his mother. In the Suffolk Papers the only other reference to him is made by Lord Bathurst who, when trying in 1734 to persuade his old friend to visit him, gives her the assurance that "My Castle is not molested by your fair son." A year later, on May 13, 1735, Lord Suffolk married Sarah, the daughter and heiress of a London brewer, Thomas Irwen, who had for a while represented Southwark in Parliament.§ He died at Audley End on March 22, 1745, and, there being no direct issue, the title passed to Henry Bowes Howard, fourth Earl of Berkshire, a descendant of the first Earl of Suffolk.

To fill the void in her heart, Lady Suffolk adopted her

* Samuel Dunster (1675–1754), D.D. 1713, a High Church parson, responsible for an uninspired translation of Horace (1710). In 1716 he preached at Court probably as a reward for his English version of Baron von Dunckelmann's "Panegyric on his Majesty King George;" in 1720 he was given the living of Paddington, in London; and two years later he was appointed Vicar of Rochdale.

† See p. 48.

‡ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 121.

§ Sarah Irwen (1714–1776) became in 1752 the second wife of Lucius Charles Cary, seventh Viscount Falkland.

brother's* daughter, Dorothy, shortly after the death of the little girl's mother in 1727. She undertook her niece's education, and kept her with her at Marble Hill until she grew up and married at the age of twenty-one. Lady Suffolk was, too, like a mother to her nephew John, who, like his sister, repaid her affection with a last devotion, and corresponded with her to the end. The earliest of his letters which have been preserved were written shortly before he attained his majority, when Dorothy and he were on a visit to their maternal grandfather. The playful tone he employed showed what an excellent understanding there was between him and his aunt of fifty-six years of age and her husband.

THE HON. JOHN HOBART TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

Circa " May, 1744.

" Since we have been at Norwich, I have seen almost every letter my sister has sent you; and, as it is evident, by your writing twice to her and not once to me, that you prefer her style to mine, I shall try for the future, if possible, to flatter you as much as she does, and will constantly tell you that I like every thing I ought to like, and dislike every thing I ought to dislike. The poor girl has lately fallen into a very odd way; for about two days ago, she took a gardener in a black waistcoat for a rat, and immediately after, fancied she was turned into a pine-apple. This was really vapours, and not affectation: for there was nobody present at that time but your humble servant. She has taken upon herself to give you an account of what passed yesterday, so I shall not mention a syllable about it.

" In your letter to her, by way of making me amends for not writing, you bestowed the gentle epithet of ' saucy whelp ' upon me. I am sorry to say, that your behaviour has convinced me, that when people have once got the character of being well-bred (by eating with their fingers, never drinking to any body,

* Sir John Hobart, fifth baronet, married in 1722, Judith, daughter of Herbert Brittiffe, of Baconsthorpe, Norfolk, who died in February, 1727, and by her had issue (1) John (1732–1793), afterwards second Earl of Buckinghamshire, (2) Robert (d. 1733), and Dorothy (1724?–1798). He married, secondly, in February, 1728, Elizabeth (d. 1762), sister of Robert Bristow, who bore him (1) George, afterwards third Earl of Buckinghamshire, and (2) Henry (d. 1799), for many years M.P. for Norwich. Sir John Hobart was raised to the peerage as Baron Hobart in 1728, and in 1746 was created Earl of Buckinghamshire.

never taking leave when they go out of an assembly, never being out of countenance, even when they ought to be so, calling modesty *mauvaise honte*, and impudence a good address) they think they have a patent for being impertinent with impunity, and that every thing they do is polite, because they are esteemed so by that insignificant sect of people who style themselves fashionable. I must indeed own, that I hope soon to be one of that insignificant sect: but until they will take me into their number, I will enjoy the noble privilege which every free-born Englishman claims, of abusing those I envy.

"But, my dear Lady Suffolk, let me entreat you not to indulge in that scurrilous way of writing. You may get a habit of it, which in the end may be disagreeable, even to yourself. For my part, as you have already frequently experienced my good-nature, I do not care if I give one more proof of it, by excusing this: but do not offend any more in the same way; or at least, if your resolution is too weak to get over this style, date your letter for the future from the Gun, at Billingsgate.

"Thine, as thou usest him,

"J. H.

"I pity Mr. Berkeley."*

THE HON. JOHN HOBART TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"May 22, 1744.

"I am going to undertake a task not altogether so difficult as those which Eurystheus (who must have been a Berkeley) imposed upon Hercules, but full as disagreeable as any of them: viz., to write to you. I must stuff a letter full of praises, of which every sensible creature knows you do not merit the least part, and must try to persuade you upon paper that I love you prodigiously, when I have full as contemptible an opinion of you as you deserve. However, your husband will chastise you for your errors sufficiently in this world; and a Supreme Being will in all probability take care of you in the next. Your faults are obvious and palpable to every one: your virtues it would be very difficult to count, as—each day discovers new. After this, it would be vain to assure you that I love you; as my honesty has thrown off the mask of flattery, and compelled me to disclose the real opinion I have of you.

"You will certainly conclude from my manner of writing that I am mad; indeed, my head is a little turned: but you have already overlooked so many of my failings, that this may very easily be passed over with the rest. Methinks it would be a

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 57.

very proper employment for those few happy mortals who have no faults of their own to excuse, to study excuses for those of others.

" The beginning of the epistle, if not agreeable, will at least be new to you. You have hardly yet ever received a letter but silver-tongued praise sweetened each line. Pope and Swift for you laid by satire, and joined for once in panegyric; but now, when ink-horns have been drained, when language has been almost exhausted in telling you a thousand different ways that you are the best woman in the world, it surely will almost please you to hear you are the worst; particularly when it comes from one whom you are sensible cannot think so. What an uncommon genius is mine! It is obvious to every fool when he receives a favour to idolize his patron; to pillage gods and heroes of attributes to adorn his monster, and give merit to that which never had any. I scorn to tread those vulgar paths, or take such methods of thanking you for the favours you have lavished on me. Therefore, instead of praising, I sat down determined to abuse you; but my real sentiments broke through this forced disguise, and my intended libel is turned into a disjointed panegyric. I will therefore conclude this tedious preamble, this gentleman-usher of the letter of business, by assuring you, that though I have had such ill success in attempting it, it is much easier to abuse than to flatter you.

" Mr. Brittiffe sent for us yesterday into his study, (as my sister has told you in hers,) and assured me that he would make what addition to my allowance you should think necessary, and told me I should never want money whilst I was prudent. Lord Hobart came over here this morning, and stayed about two hours. He has invited us to dine with him at Blickling on Thursday. He mentioned nothing of carrying us back to London; so that in all probability we shall return as we came. Mr. Brittiffe talked to him of my going abroad, which he treated as a ridiculous scheme; but Mr. Brittiffe seems determined to follow *your* advice absolutely in relation to both my sister and me. Upon my telling him that I was sorry to be burthensome to him, he said that it was the same thing to him; that he should only have the less to leave me at his death. He does not seem to disapprove of my going abroad; but hinted that he expected to hear from you upon these heads. He is excessively fond of us both; and Mrs. Brittiffe expresses great regard; they almost dote upon my sister, who takes great pains to be agreeable to them. Let me hear from you soon, if possible. I will write again the next post.

" Pray make my compliments to Mr. Berkeley."*

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 58.

THE HON. JOHN HOBART TO THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY

Circa "May, 1744.

"As Lady Suffolk, by neglecting writing to me, has convinced me how cheap she holds my correspondence, and consequently how unworthy she is of it, I shall for the future favour only those with it who know how to value it, and duly acknowledge the pleasure they receive from my writings. You have sense, you have taste; you had the advantage of being educated first at Westminster, and afterwards at Cambridge; you have a high opinion of my understanding, which is a sufficient proof to me that you have a good one. I once thought that silly woman who has the honour to call you husband had been free from at least the more glaring foibles of her sex: I almost loved woman for her sake, and thought the bitter apple began to digest, and that, in fine, they might attain to a sagacity equal to that of the lords of the creation. But, alas! how is she fallen! There was a time when she would have been thankful even for a line from me; but she shall gormandize no more on my golden apples. No: she shall feed on garbage, and chew the scraps that the Grenvilles, and Pitts, and such like, send her; the cold viands of politics; the half-picked bones of a debate. If I was to stay in Norfolk long enough, I dare swear you would convince me by writing every post of your gratitude; but as you will now have no opportunity of doing it, I shall charitably conclude you would if you had. I shall for the future confound Lady Suffolk with the rest of her illiterate sex, and conclude, from her having at last undeceived me, and discovered her bad taste, that no woman can have a real good one. When they are handsome, they have just sense enough to make men ridiculous; when they are ugly, they have sufficient eloquence to expose one another.

"Lest you should think I only rail because I am piqued, and that these are the pangs of despised love, I shall say no more upon this subject, which, though in general I despise, in some particulars I must confess I love to dwell upon.

"Sir, I honour *you*,

"JOHN HOBART."*

The pleasant life of Lady Suffolk and her husband at Marble Hill, varied by visits to Savile Row during the Parliamentary Sessions, and an occasional sojourn at the country houses of friends or at Bath for health's sake, endured until the death of Berkeley, who in his later years had suffered greatly from gout, on October 29, 1746.

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 60.

CHAPTER XVI

LAST YEARS

1747–1767

After Berkeley's death, Lady Suffolk lives in retirement—Her old friends faithful to her—" Black Will " Chetwynd—Lady Dorothy Hobart—Her marriage to Colonel Hotham—Their daughter Harriet adopted by Lady Suffolk—Lady Suffolk's fortune—Marble Hill—Death of Pope—New neighbours at Twickenham—Paul Whitehead—Sir John Hawkins—Richard Owen Cambridge—Lady Denbigh—Lady Blandford—Horace Walpole—His affection for Lady Suffolk—His " Reminiscences "—Lady Suffolk's nephew, John, second Earl of Buckinghamshire—His early career—His marriage—Appointed Ambassador to Russia—His correspondence with Lady Suffolk—Their affection for each other—His craving for news—His humorous letters—His subsequent career—Lady Suffolk's last years—Her increasing infirmities—She retains her mental faculties to the end—Her playful correspondence with Lord Chesterfield in the last year of her life—Her death—Horace Walpole's tribute—Her many virtues.

AFTER the death of her second husband, Lady Suffolk, who was then in her fifty-ninth year, led a very retired life, both in London and at Twickenham. Her old friends, however, were faithful, and among those who came to Marble Hill and corresponded with her were her niece Lady Vere, Ann Pitt, Charles Townshend*—who later, as will be seen, fell out of favour—Lady Dalkeith,† Lord and Lady Strafford, William

* The Hon. Charles Townshend (1725–1767), second son of Charles, third Viscount Townshend, Secretary-at-War, 1761–1762 ; President of the Board of Trade, 1763 ; Paymaster of the Forces, 1765 ; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1766–1767.

† Lady Caroline Campbell (d. 1794), daughter of John, second Duke of Argyll, married James Scott, known under the style of Earl of Dalkeith, the eldest son of James, second Duke of Buccleuch. Lord Dalkeith predeceased his father, and his widow married, secondly, the Hon. Charles Townshend. She was created Baroness of Greenwich on August 28, 1767, a week before Townshend's death.

Murray, and the Grenvilles. A frequent visitor was "Black Will" Chetwynd,* who transferred to her the affection he had had for Berkeley. He preserved his youthful spirits till a very advanced age, a fact which was made the subject of many playful jests by those who loved him. "Mr. Chetwynd [then aged eighty], I suppose, is making the utmost advantage of my absence, and frisking and cutting capers before Miss Hotham [aged twelve], and advising her not to throw herself away on a decrepit old man. Well, well; fifty years hence he may begin to be an old man too, and then I shall not pity him, though I own he is the best humoured *lad* in the world now," Horace Walpole wrote from London to Lady Suffolk, July 9, 1765; and in October of the same year writing from Paris, he referred to him again: "Mr. Chetwynd, I conclude, is dancing at country balls and horse-races. It is charming to be so young; but I do not envy one whose youth is so good-humoured and good-natured. When he gallops post to town, or swims his horse through a mill-pool in November, pray make my compliments to him."†

Members of a younger generation were attracted to Savile Row and Marble Hill by the presence there of Lady Suffolk's adopted daughter, Dorothy—after 1746, when her father was created Earl of Buckinghamshire, Lady Dorothy—Hobart. Lady Dorothy had many admirers, though it must be confessed that one of these was obviously more interested in her dowry than in her person. "I have lately seen the person who enquired for another what Lady Dorothy's fortune was to be," Lady Betty Germaine wrote to Lady Suffolk, November 18, 1748, "and on expressing my wonder, that I had never heard of them since, I was told point blank, that nothing less than twenty thousand pounds down would do for the gentleman. I could not help thinking that if so, the gentleman either had a small cumbered estate, or was not much in love with one I thought very desirable; but which is the case I could get no answer, only it would not do."‡ A less mercenary suitor found favour in Lady Dorothy's eyes, and in 1752 she was married to Colonel

* See p. 254.

† Add. MSS. 22626, f. 124.

‡ Add. MSS. 22627, f. 81.

Charles Hotham.* A daughter of this marriage, Harriet, was adopted by Lady Suffolk, whose aim it was, from this time forth, to save a competence for her protégée. The general opinion was that Lady Suffolk was a rich woman, but this was far from being the truth. She had, it has been said, an income from George II., but this ceased at his death in 1760, seven years before she passed away, and during this latter period she was hard put to it not to encroach upon the small fortune she was saving for her grand-niece. "I believe both your Lordship and Lady Strafford will be surprised to hear that Lady Suffolk was by no means in the situation that most people thought," Horace Walpole wrote to Lord Strafford on July 29, 1767, a few days after his old friend's death. "Lord Chetwynd† and myself were the only persons at all acquainted with her affairs; and they were far from being easy, even to her. It is due to her memory to say, that I never saw more strict honour and justice. She bore *knowingly* the imputation of being covetous, at a time that the strictest economy could by no means prevent her exceeding her income considerably—the anguish of the last years of her life, though concealed, flowed from the apprehension of not satisfying her few wishes, which were, not to be in debt, and to make a provision for Miss Hotham. I can give your lordship strong instances of the sacrifices she tried to make to her principles. I have not yet heard if her will is opened; but it will surprise those who thought her rich."‡ Lady Suffolk left, besides the property of Marble Hill, a sum less than £20,000. The money went to Miss Hotham; the house to her nephew, Lord Buckinghamshire, for life, and then, by a provision in her will, passed absolutely to Miss Hotham. Miss Hotham, who died unmarried in 1816, came into possession of Marble Hill in 1793, and presently let, or sold, it to Mrs. Herbert, who had been privately married to the Prince of Wales. Subsequently it had for a tenant the Marquis of Wellesley.

* Charles (d. 1794), eldest son of Sir Beaumont Hotham, seventh baronet, by his wife, Frances, daughter of the Rev. William Thompson. Charles succeeded to the baronetcy in 1771, and on inheriting the maternal estates assumed the name of Thompson.

† William Chetwynd succeeded his brother as (third) Viscount Chetwynd on June 21, 1767.

‡ Walpole: *Letters* (ed. Cunningham).

Death had taken its toll of those who lived at Twickenham when Lady Howard built Marble Hill. Pope had been taken in 1744. Him, one of her oldest and kindest friends, Lady Suffolk could not replace in her affections, but she did not close her heart to new neighbours. Paul Whitehead* was now at Colne Lodge on the Heath; and in 1759 John Hawkins,† the biographer of Johnson, purchased Twickenham Heath. Eight years before Hawkins came there, Richard Owen Cambridge had settled there with his family in the house which afterwards bore his name. He was a great acquisition to the local society, for he was a wit, and frequented the company of his fellows. Of his verse, the mock-heroic poem, "The Scribleriad," was the best known, and it had a considerable vogue. He was, too, a contributor to Edward Moore's paper, the *World*, and *à propos* of his connection with this a good story is told. "A note from Mr. Moore requesting an essay was put into my father's hands on a Sunday morning as he was going to church," his son related; "my mother, observing him rather inattentive during the sermon, whispered, 'What are you thinking of?' He replied, 'The Next World.'" Cambridge survived until 1802, when he was in his eighty-sixth year, and was a line between the circle of Lady Suffolk and that of the Misses Berry.

After the death of her husband in 1755, Lady Denbigh‡ resided in the neighbourhood, and with her lived her sister, Lady Blandford.§ The two old ladies were intimate with Lady Suffolk, and the latter, who had at this time been a widow for more than a score of years, was a great joy to Lady Suffolk's nephew, Lord Buckinghamshire, who, when he was Ambassador at St. Petersburg, wrote most amusingly about her from thence to his aunt. "I hardly know how to take up again the subject

* Paul Whitehead (1710–1774), the author of numerous political satires.

† John Hawkins (1719–1789), man of letters; author of a "General History of Music," 1776; published a biography of Johnson and edited his works, 1787–1789; J.P. for Middlesex; knighted, 1772; a friend of Horace Walpole and David Garrick.

‡ Isabella, daughter of Peter d'Jong of Utrecht, married William Feilding, fifth Earl of Denbigh (d. 1755).

§ Maria Catherine d'Jong married, first, William, Marquis of Blandford, and, secondly, Sir William Wyndham (d. 1740).

in which I was unfortunately interrupted the last post—the amours of the Marchioness of Blandford," he said in a letter, dated September 13, 1763; "and yet, upon my word, the reflections which my regard for her suggest to me, have more than once broken my rest. That she will marry Count Woronzow, I no more doubt than that in consequence she will change her religion, and attend him some few years hence to his mother country. You will, therefore, permit me to make what certainly is far from an improbable supposition that she is at this moment his wife; and in that idea I should wish to convey through your channel to our common friend, some advice which her husband's tenderness and delicacy for her will not in these early days when love is young and desires are new permit him to hint to her. She must learn Russ, eat mushrooms fried in rape oil and pickled cucumbers in Lent; she must forget to courtesy and learn to bow, she must wear red without measure, dance Polish dances, and drink Chistershij, Quash, and Burton Ale, the nature of the first two her dear man will inform her of, the last she will know is the produce of England."* He returned with great zest to the subject in the following month. "As no fresh scandal has lately reached me in relation to Lady Blandford and Count Woronzow," he wrote, "I am to take it for granted that either that affair is totally broke off, or else so generally understood to be concluded as to be no longer the subject of conversation. You are always so properly upon the reserve that it will be difficult for me to draw any of the most interesting particulars from you, but I fancy at my return, between the Duchess of Argyll, Lady Denbigh, Lady Lichfield,† and Lady Sebright,‡ I shall be acquainted at least with all that has passed."§

* *Lothian MSS.*, 177.

† Dinah, daughter of Sir Thomas Frankland, third baronet, of Thirkleby, Yorkshire, married George Henry Lee, third Earl of Lichfield.

‡ As the peerage states that the fifth baronet died unmarried and the holder of the title at this time, Sir Thomas Saunders Sebright, did not marry until 1766, the Lady Sebright referred to must be the widow of Sir Thomas, fourth baronet, who died in 1736. She was a daughter of Sir Francis Dashwood, of Wycombe.

§ *Lothian MSS.*, 178.

The greatest acquisition to the neighbourhood, and, incidentally, to Lady Suffolk, was Horace Walpole, who purchased Strawberry Hill in 1747, and made it his home. "Being much acquainted with the houses of Dorset, Vere, and others of Lady Suffolk's intimates, I was become known to her, though she and my father had been at the head of two such hostile factions at Court," he wrote subsequently. "Becoming neighbours, and both, after her second husband's death, living single and alone, our acquaintance ripened into intimacy. She was extremely deaf, and consequently had more satisfaction in narrating than in listening; her memory both of remote and of the more recent facts was correct beyond belief. I . . . was indulgent to, and fond of, old anecdotes. Each of us knew different parts of many Court stories, and each was eager to learn what either could relate more; and thus, by comparing notes, we sometimes could make out discoveries of a third circumstance, before unknown to both. These evenings, and I had many of them in autumnal nights, were extremely agreeable."* Much that Walpole gleaned from Lady Suffolk's conversations with him may be read in the well-known "Reminiscences" which he compiled twenty years after her death. Though his memory betrayed him into some minor blunders, yet on the whole he wrote of her well and truly.

He was devoted to her, visiting her regularly when he was at Strawberry Hill, and writing to her when he was in London or abroad. His letters, however, are too well known to be inserted here.

As the years passed she almost entirely lost her hearing, and this disinclined her to go into general society, though to the end she retained her interest in people and events, and to the end she maintained an active correspondence with her nephew, John Hobart, who was after 1746, when his father was created an Earl, known under the style of Lord Hobart. He entered Parliament in 1747 as member for Norwich. He was made Comptroller of the Household in 1755, but resigned this office next year on succeeding as (second) Earl of Buckinghamshire, and then became a Lord of the Bedchamber. He married in July, 1761, Mary Anne, daughter of Sir Thomas Drury,

* *Reminiscences*, CXXXII.

Bart.* When, twelve months later, he was appointed Ambassador to Russia, and set forth with his half-brother George as Secretary to the Embassy, he left his wife and infant daughter in the care of Lady Suffolk at Marble Hill. "I am glad," he wrote to his aunt, July 18, 1763, "that Lady Harriet meets with your approbation, and that Miss Harriet [Hotham, his niece] approves of me."† He was, indeed, truly grateful to her. "I have lately had some letters from England," he wrote again thirteen months later. "Lady Buckinghamshire's are full of her sensibility of your goodness to her. Though she does not own it, I am persuaded you make her more than amends for the absence of her husband."‡

From St. Petersburg and Moscow Lord Buckinghamshire wrote to Lady Suffolk, and she replied with a regularity that was surprising in a woman more than seventy years of age. Indeed the letters that passed between them are not only interesting in themselves, but have a distinct biographical value, since hers show full possession of her intelligence, and his, by treating of politics as well as persons, demonstrate clearly that the range of her interests had not diminished with her years.

Lord Buckinghamshire was always complaining that in Russia he could not get intelligence of what was happening in England, and when any news did reach him he was quick to comment on it. On receipt of the tidings of the fall of Bute on April 8, and the publication fifteen days later of the famous No. 45 of Wilkes's *North Briton*, "Many are the unpleasant sensations which offer themselves to me upon that which is the present state of affairs in England," he wrote to Lady Suffolk. "The first and strongest (to you I need not dissemble) is my concern for my gracious Master, and the reflection upon the un-

* By his first wife Lord Buckinghamshire had issue: (1) Harriet (1762–1805), married, first, Armar Lowry, first Earl of Belmore, and, after this alliance was dissolved by Parliament in 1793, William Kerr, sixth Marquis of Lothian; (2) Caroline (d. 1850), married William Assheton Harbord, second Baron Suffield; and (3) Sophia (d. 1806), married Richard Edgcumbe, second Earl of Mount-Edgcumbe. Lord Buckinghamshire married secondly in 1770 Caroline, daughter of William Conolly, of Stratton Hall, Stafford, who bore him one daughter: Emily Anne (1772–1829), who married in 1794 Robert Stewart, second Marquis of Londonderry.

† *Lothian MSS.*, 175.

‡ *Ibid.*, 187.

JOHN HOBART, SECOND EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
After a portrait by Thomas Gainsborough.

[*To face p.* 274.

easiness he must at this time feel, and which surely he has so little deserved. If there is a man, who from private interest or personal spleen has raised this storm, may sorrow, disgrace, and infamy attend him."*

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK TO THE EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

"Marble Hill,
"June 12, 1763.

"How ungrateful must Lady Suffolk appear for dear Lord Buckinghamshire's so many kind letters and remembrance of her! Four weeks has she let pass without one word of thanks, or even of acknowledgment, for these marks of goodness and attention: and now what is she to say? Nothing to please him, if she believes (as indeed she ought) that he wishes her well; so the less she says on what is past the better: but she can now assure him that she is got very tolerably well, and does most affectionately thank him for his letters and his present. She hears the King received his most graciously; and indeed, if Lord Buckinghamshire's correspondent does his master justice, *he* has all reason to think himself happy in such a master. Lady Suffolk thinks that she can answer that the servant——

"(Lady S. began to write on half a sheet of paper: Lord B. must excuse it, as well as ten thousand other mistakes that she makes whenever she pretends to write letters.)—will not prove a useless one. She was charmed with the proof he has given how he passes his leisure hours. The man who wrote that letter will always be of great service and credit to those that employ him.

"What answer can Lady Suffolk make to those constant complaints of Lord Buckinghamshire, *that he knows nothing of what passes in England?* She is not conscious that any thing *has*, in which he had a personal concern, that she has not given him a hint of it, before it was publicly known: and how to write at once prudently and minutely on those great events, and what has been consequent upon them, is much beyond her capacity. She will now try to puzzle him. Can he find out who that person [Charles Townshend] is that aspires to be the first, by the following description of him? Very young; very ambitious; brought into the great world by a worthy, honest, and very particular friend [George Grenville] of Lord Buckinghamshire, and yet who had rather get over such a friend's head than any other way; very presumptuous, but must never be contradicted,

* St. Petersburg, June 10, 1763; *Lothian MSS.*, 174.

though the step should involve his best friend in the greatest difficulty :—now, to finish with a paradox—yet it is very doubtful whether the person betrayed suspects that he is so.

" Lord Buckinghamshire's former passions go off very quickly : Poor Lady Northampton* is dead at Naples, and it is much feared Lord Northampton is by this time dead at Venice ; and they are now carrying Lord Brownlow Bertie† to see what the air of France will do for him. All Lady Suffolk's friends are going to Italy, France, or the Spa ; some for pleasure, some for health.

" Lady Buckinghamshire has given Lady Suffolk great uneasiness : she did not think her well ; and Lord Buckinghamshire knows she is not apt to take care of herself ; but by a little art she has been brought to drink asses' milk, and to follow some other directions, by the use of which she is now much better. No notice must be taken of this, as Lady Suffolk would not be forgiven ; and it would put it out of her power to be useful to her, or to know certainly how she was : consequently unable her to give Lord Buckinghamshire such *constant* and just *intelligence* as he could depend upon : as things stand now, he may depend on both. Lady Harriet Hobart is a very fine child, very healthy, forward on her feet, and takes great pains to be so with her tongue. Miss Hotham is vastly pleased with Lord Buckinghamshire's taking constant notice of her ; and really seems grateful for, as well as vain of it. Mr. George Hobart is now expected every day ; by accounts from Berlin his illness is no trifling affair. All Lord Buckinghamshire's public and private friends, not mentioned, are well. God bless and preserve him is most sincerely wished by his affectionate old aunt."‡

The Ambassador was always begging for tidings of home affairs, political and personal. He reproached his aunt with not saying a word about Marble Hill or its inmates, or of her friends " Black Will " Chetwynd or Horace Walpole, and especially for not giving him news of " Mr. Cambridge, nor the least hint of the latter's opinion upon the case of Wilkes and the Secretaries [of State] : he must have been very ingenious, very

* Lady Anne Somerset, daughter of Charles, fourth Duke of Beaufort, married in 1759 Charles Compton, seventh Earl of Northampton. Lord Northampton survived only until the following October 18.

† Lord Brownlow Bertie (d. 1818), third son of Peregrine, second Duke of Ancaster. He succeeded his nephew Robert as fifth Duke of Ancaster in 1779.

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 91.

busy, and ultimately a little tiresome upon that copious subject."* In a later letter he referred to the portrait which Lady Suffolk had drawn of Charles Townshend, and commented upon this politician: "He may be happy in himself and great in his own conceit, but I never knew the man whose connection I should so wish to avoid. How he ever came to be in that rank in which he is placed is a wonder that will cost me some time to get over." He then, with a touch of unctuous rectitude, unusual in his correspondence, yielded to the temptation to pat himself on the back. "Every man who is in the least cast into public life wishes to be in some sort distinguished," he said, "yet I sometimes flatter myself that I have virtue enough, if once I could see Government settled at home agreeably to him who has a right to be pleased and upon that firm basis which may make England as respectable in peace as it has lately been in war, to sit down contented with such a situation as may be allotted to me."†

Lord Buckinghamshire, however, could change from grave to gay. "The Russian spring is begun; that is to say, it freezes all night and thaws all day; early in the morning you travel upon ice, but all the rest of the day the streets are canals," he wrote. "A fair lady was telling me my fortune last night, and informed me that I should live to be very old, 'Mais que cela n'en vaudroit pas la peine, comme je deviendrois hypocondre et goutteux.' Voilà un bel horoscope."‡ In this light vein he indulged sometimes with success.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Dowager Countess of Suffolk

"St. Petersburg,
"November 11, 1763.

"Were it not for the information which I occasionally receive from that chaos of truth and falsehood, which composes the English newspapers, I should return to London as much a stranger to the customs, manners, ideas, and passions of my countrymen as well to the names, merits, and qualifications of those eminent personages, who are distinguished by the applause of their fellow subjects upon the great theatre of London, as if

* St. Petersburg, June 22, 1763; *Lothian MSS.*, 175.

† *Ibid.*

‡ St. Petersburg, March 23, 1764; *Lothian MSS.*, 181.

I had never seen my Lord Mayor, Nelly O'Brien, the lions, Mr. Wilkes, or the Monument. Great and interesting intelligence I receive from the *Gazetteer*, the *Chronicle*, etc. Miss Elliot, Mr. Shuter, and Mr. Woodward exhibit at Covent Garden; Miss Pope, Mr. Yates, and a nameless promising young gentleman display their merit at Drury Lane. Some account is also given of the audience. Lord Granby* was seen in a side box with Mr. Wilkes, and the Rev. Mr. Churchill,† to the great satisfaction of the pit and gallery. I have not lately heard of the consequences of those two worthy gentlemen who were placed so near my noble friend: they must, therefore, excuse me if I think they were most highly honoured in his company. I shall always, were it only in gratitude for former amusements, interest myself for the Theatres Royal. But there is another theatre, other actors, and other scenes nearly opening, an accurate description of which I am still more solicitous to receive. Is the season to begin with a tragedy or comedy? If the former, I hope the fifth act will be over before my return to England, and that I shall find all my friends laughing at the farce."‡

THE EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"St. Petersburg,
"November 18, 1763.

"Lady Buckinghamshire informs me of the purchase which Lady Denbigh,§ carrying her wordly views to the very last stage of mortality, has lately made.

"Very different are the objects of the two sisters; but each seems to be too much directed by sensuality: the one has fixed her affection upon a Muscovite, who is very much alive, the other upon a departed philosopher.‖ With regard to the first, the extremity of christian charity may indeed suppose her attachment to be merely to the mind of the young gentleman, and that not the least intemperate idea is blended in their senti-

* John Manners, known under the style of the Marquis of Granby (1721-1770), eldest son of John, third Duke of Rutland, whom he predeceased. Lord Granby had served with distinction in the army; he was Master-General of the Ordnance, 1763; Commander-in-Chief, 1766–1770.

† Charles Churchill (1731–1764), curate of St. John's, Westminster, 1758–1763, and famous as the author of "The Rosciad" (1761), and other satires; a friend and supporter of Wilkes.

‡ *Lothian MSS.*, 179.

§ Lady Denbigh had purchased a grave in Teddington Churchyard.

‖ Dr. Hales (d. 1761), Rector of Teddington.

mental connexion : but far other must be the animal views of your neighbour, who with such premeditation provides that her corporeal parts may be squeezed close to the remains of Dr. Hales ; for as to his soul, she is certainly much more likely to find it anywhere than in Teddington churchyard. I do not excel in fancy, yet will mention a thought that occurs to me, which you may recommend, if you approve of it, to the good countess. She may purchase of the sexton of Teddington those venerable relics which she so greatly prizes, and probably at a much less expense than what she paid for the contiguous mould : these, with reverence due, must be consumed upon a funeral pile, and the hallowed ashes gathered in an urn, which should be deposited in her bedchamber, till time has made her clay a proper subject for the same operation ; then let her dust be mixed with his, and incorporated with the soil of some pleasant mound at Strawberry Hill. The pious owner [Horace Walpole] will plant a myrtle upon the sacred spot, there long to flourish, the vegetating monument of their mutual affection.

" You say you think I am cheerful, from the style of my letters : encourage that thought, as I am sure it will give you pleasure. To give you a short idea of my state, I try to make the most of what is ; regret only one year (and that not 1763) of all that is past ; and have no very sanguine hopes of the future. Let me hear that your cold is well : make my compliments to Miss Harriet ; and believe me,

" Your most affectionate nephew,
" Buckinghamshire.

" P.S. [to Harriet Hotham]. This letter was intended for Lady Suffolk ; but as in a letter I have this moment received, you mention that she thinks my style extravagant, you will read it to her or not as you please. I have no reason to doubt of having his Majesty's permission to return next summer."*

The Dowager Countess of Suffolk to the Earl of Buckinghamshire

" November 25, 1763.

" I must write, though head, eyes, and fingers forbid it. My dear Lord Buckinghamshire is so much better than I deserve in so often taking notice of his old aunt, that she now exerts all her little powers to thank him for his goodness to her. Mr. Hobart and Colonel Hotham assure me they constantly give you accounts of what passes in St. Stephen's Chapel, and of other matters, much too high and intricate for my capacity either to judge of,

* Add. MSS. 22629, f. 96.

or even to comprehend. They say Sir Joseph Yorke* comes over, and Mr. Stanley† goes to Holland as envoy ; this answers a paragraph in one of your former letters : indeed, I do believe economy becomes absolutely necessary. Jemmy G[renville]‡ has opened very violently against Mr. G[eorge Grenville], even to be painful to the hearers. . . . Do you approve Mr. Martin challenging and fighting Wilkes,§ when two such great charges and so very different in their nature, lay against him in both houses of Parliament? Lord Effingham|| is dead. I believe Lord Suffolk¶ succeeds to the Earl-Marshal's staff, by the Duke of Norfolk's** nomination, and his Majesty has given the Horse Grenadiers to Lord Cantiloupe.†† I am one of those who do not——

" Tuesday, November 29.

" ——believe all that is said of Colonel C.'s gallantry ; but I guess it will surprise you to be told with certainty that Admiral K—— lives now with his wife in perfect harmony. All things are at a full stand in Wilkes's affair, till he is able to appear in person.

" Jemmy G[renville] and Mr. Rigby‡‡ were so violent against each other, one in his manner of treating Lord T[emple] who

* Joseph (1724–1792), a younger son of Philip Yorke, first Earl of Hardwicke. He was a soldier and was present at Fontenoy. In later life he became a diplomatist, and was Minister at The Hague, 1751, and Ambassador 1761–1780. He was made K.B. 1761, and created Baron Dover, 1788.

† Hans Stanley (1720?–1780), a Lord of the Admiralty, 1761–1765 ; Cofferer of the Household, 1766–1774, and again 1776–1780.

‡ James (b. 1715), fourth son of Richard Grenville, of Wotton Hall, Buckinghamshire, and brother of Richard, Earl Temple, and George Grenville (see p. 261).

§ Samuel Martin, Secretary to the Treasury, fought a duel with Wilkes on November 16, 1763, in which the latter was severely wounded.

|| Thomas Howard, second Earl of Effingham (d. November 19, 1763), Deputy Earl-Marshal, 1743–1763, and Colonel of the Horse Grenadiers.

¶ Henry Howard, twelfth Earl of Suffolk (1739–1779), Deputy Earl-Marshal, 1763–1765. Owing to the legal incapacity of the Dukes of Norfolk, who were Roman Catholics, to fulfil the functions of their hereditary office of Earl-Marshal from 1661 to 1824, they appointed a deputy.

** Edward Howard (1727–1777), ninth Duke of Norfolk.

†† John West (1729–1777), known under the style of Lord Cantiloupe, until 1766, when he succeeded as second Earl of Delawarr. He was Vice-Chamberlain to Queen Charlotte until 1766, and was then appointed her Majesty's Master of the Horse.

‡‡ Richard Rigby (1722–1788), politician, M.P. for Tavistock, 1754–1784 ; Master of the Rolls for Ireland, 1759 ; Vice-Treasurer for Ireland, 1765 ; Paymaster of the Forces, 1768–1784 ; a bitter opponent of Wilkes.

was in the House, and the brother in justification of his brother, that the House was obliged to interpose to prevent mischief.* To-day the King sends his Message to the House relative to the Princess Augusta's marriage.†

"Lord T[emple] comes to me; but politics is the bane of friendship, and when personal resentments join, the man becomes another creature: when you return, experience will convince you of the truth of what I say. I have got your letter of Oct. 23.

"Lady D[orothy Hotham] is by no means well; your family perfectly so. Miss H[otham]'s duty, with very pretty expressions of gratitude for the honour of your notice of her. Lady B. Germaine was vastly pleased with your compliments to her."‡

THE EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"St. Petersburg,
"July 10, 1764.

"There is no person but yourself to whom I can talk with confidence upon my situation, and, therefore, you must in some sort excuse my explaining to you some circumstances which give me great uneasiness. Your Ladyship knows full well that Mr. Grenville is the only friend I can in the least depend upon in the present Administration.§ Lord Halifax‖ has no longer any regard for me, and though Lord Sandwich¶ ever since he came into office has behaved to me with the greatest civility and attention, I have no right to expect any particular support from his Lordship, the Duke of Bedford,** and Lord Holland.†† The

* Grenville and Rigby had to give an undertaking in the House of Commons not to prosecute the matter further—that is to say, not to fight a duel.—*Parliamentary History*, XV. 1362.

† Augusta (1737–1813), elder daughter of Frederick Prince of Wales, married Charles William Ferdinand, hereditary Prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel.

‡ Add. MSS. 22629, f. 98.

§ The Administration of George Grenville, May, 1763–July, 1765.

‖ George Montagu Dunk, second Earl of Halifax (1716–1771), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1761–1763; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1762; Secretary of State, 1762–1765; Lord Privy Seal, 1770; Secretary of State, 1771.

¶ John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792), First Lord of the Admiralty, 1748–1751, and again 1762; Secretary of State, 1763–1765; for the third time First Lord of the Admiralty, 1771–1782.

** See p. 261

†† Henry Fox, first Baron Holland (1705–1774), Secretary of State, 1755–1756; Paymaster-General, 1757–1763; created Baron Holland, 1763.

manner in which his Majesty is pleased to recall me, leaving me at liberty with regard to the time, is most gracious, and I should have been thoroughly satisfied with it, had not Mr. Grenville's silence upon that occasion most sensibly mortified me. I hardly dare tell you in my present temper how very little pleasure I promise myself in returning to England. Your ladyship and Lady Buckinghamshire will be glad to see me. I cannot answer for many more."*

THE EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TO THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK

"St. Petersburg,
"November 20, 1764.

"'Not with a highwayman, you sorry slut!' says Miss Peachum to Miss Polly,† when, after the discovery of her marriage with the seducing Captain,† she sings, 'Can love be controlled by advice?' Extraordinary as my letters usually are, the beginning of this will still surprise you, till you know that I am just informed that the sister of the M[arquis] of R[ockingham]‡ and the niece of the E[arl] of W[inchelsea] has thrown herself into the arms of her Irish footman. As the lady is a full-grown child and has probably made her reflections, the footman is the proper object of compassion. It is most amazing to me that the numberless instances of ruinous and disgraceful matches should not suggest some serious reflections to parents and guardians, and introduce a different mode of education? Yet what expedients can avail? How can you preserve and protect your child when the physician who feels her pulse, the surgeon who breathes [*sic*] the vein, every person whose profession or talents are essential to improve her, the footman who carries the flambeau, and even the sprightly ostler, who expeditiously harnesses two miserable hacks to a post-chaise, are equally dangerous?

"Your extensive notions of liberty and the high prerogatives of the female world are well known to me and in a degree merit approbation; but will you not allow me to confine the daughters when I give it as my opinion that the mothers ought to have no control—a doctrine which I preach by example. Mr. Prior says, 'Clap a padlock on your mind.' Agreed! But then there must be a mind to fix it on. If you fasten your padlock upon

* *Lothian MSS.*, 185.

† Characters in Gay's *Beggar's Opera*.

‡ Thomas Watson Wentworth, first Marquis of Rockingham (d. 1750), married Lady Mary Finch, fourth daughter of Daniel, sixth Earl of Winchelsea and second Earl of Nottingham.

a sap of green wood, can you expect it to hold? It may be said, 'Why should not young women have opportunities of looking round the world, of seeing varieties of men, of sifting their characters, and choosing him whom their inclinations favour and their judgment approves?' Because, for obvious, if indeed for excusable, reasons, nineteen times in twenty they will choose wrong."*

Lord Buckinghamshire arrived in England in March, 1765, and in the following year was offered, by Lord Shelbourne,† and declined, a special mission to Spain.‡ He was no favourite with George III., who convincingly proved his dislike by dismissing him, in 1767, from his place as Lord of the Bedchamber. No office was found for him in the short-lived Rockingham Administration, nor indeed in any other ministry, until in 1777 Lord North,§ in defiance of the King's wishes, sent him to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, where he remained for four years.

In the last years of her life Lady Suffolk's infirmities multiplied, but she bore them stoically. "Lady Buckinghamshire writes me word that you are in good spirits," her nephew had written to her from St. Petersburg, August 9, 1763. "Why indeed should you be otherwise? You act up to what your morality and your religion tell you is right; the consciousness of that must make every occasional discomposure, every ailment which the frail nature of man is liable to, of little comfort."‖ Three years later she showed that she had preserved all her mental faculties by taking part in a playful correspondence with Lord Chesterfield, in which she wrote as from her maid, and he as from his footman,¶ writing in the same vein as they had employed nearly half a century earlier when the letters were supposed to pass between Lord Chesterfield (then Lord Stanhope) and Lady Suffolk (then Mrs. Howard)'s lap-dog Marquise. Old

* *Lothian MSS.*, 190.

† William Petty, second Earl of Shelbourne (1757–1805), at this time Secretary of State; created Marquis of Lansdowne, 1784.

‡ *Grenville Papers*, III. 328.

§ Frederick North, known under the style of Lord North (1732–1792), Prime Minister, 1770–1782; succeeded as (second) Earl of Guilford, 1790.

‖ *Lothian MSS.*, 175.

¶ Add. MSS. 22625, f. 115.

age, however, is bound ultimately to have its way, and the end came on July 26, 1767, when she was in her eightieth year. "I was with her for two hours on Saturday night," Horace Walpole wrote to Lord Strafford three days later, "and indeed found her much changed, though I did not apprehend her in danger. I was going to say she complained—but you know she never did complain—of the gout and rheumatism all over her, particularly in her face. It was a cold night, and she sat below stairs when she should have been in bed; and I doubt this want of care was prejudicial. I sent next morning. She had a bad night; but grew much better in the evening. Lady Dalkeith came to her; and when she was gone, Lady Suffolk said to Lord Chetwynd, she would eat her supper in her bedchamber. He went up with her, and thought the appearances promised a good night; but she was scarce sat down in her chair, before she pressed her hand to her side, and died in half an hour."*

"I never knew a woman more respectable for her honour and principles, and have lost few persons in my life whom I shall miss so much,"* wrote Horace Walpole, who in his judgment did not err on the side of charity. This pronouncement may well stand for Lady Suffolk's epitaph. Whatever her faults may have been, they were cast into shadows by her many virtues. Beloved by all who knew her, alike in youth and in old age, kind-hearted, open-handed, eager to assist those in distress, a loyal friend, a generous relative, she passed away deeply regretted.

* *Letters* (ed. Cunningham).

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